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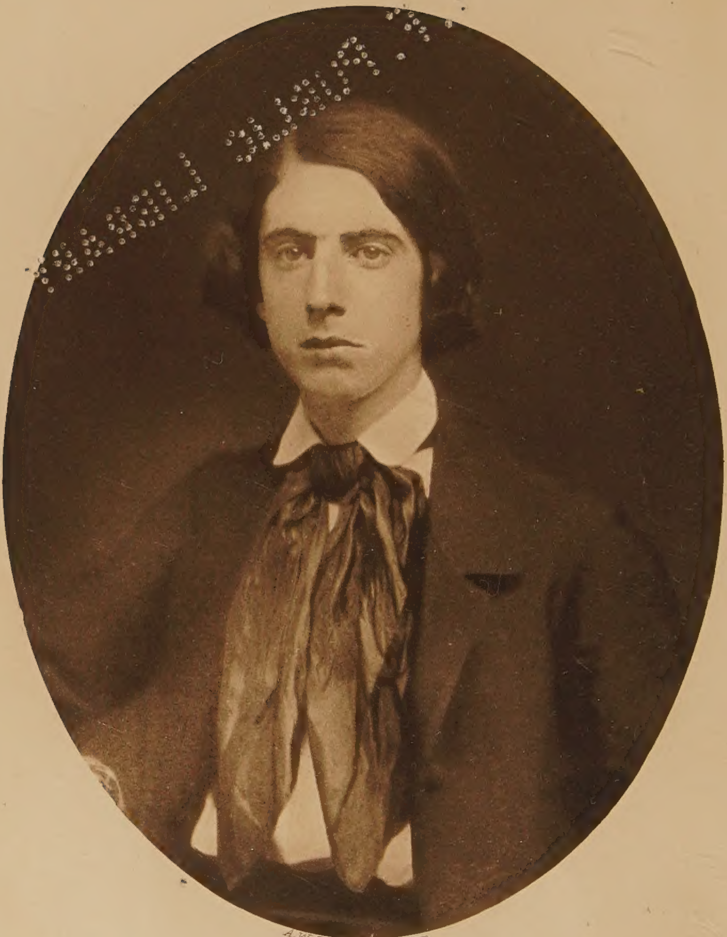

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Edmund Clarence Stedman
At the age of fifteen

LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

BY

LAURA STEDMAN
AND
GEORGE M. GOULD, M.D.

ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME ONE

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MOFFAT, YARD AND COMPANY
1910

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PREFATORY NOTE

One who influences public feeling or opinion learns how prone to misrepresent are they who speak for him. Even with the best intention none may repeat another's view except in the precise words used by him; and the greater the man and the more efficient his conscience, the more pronounced will be the ill effect of inaccurate translation. Of this my Grandfather was convinced early in life, so that, when his opinion was sought by reporters, friends, or assistants, it became habitual with him to reiterate: "*Do not paraphrase! Use my words!*" And, as a rule, he insured the desired correctness by writing out the words he wished them to use.

The injunction, "Do not paraphrase," he particularly laid upon those who might serve him in a biographic way.

"*Traduttore traditore*" may apply, therefore, quite as well to biography as to translation. This is suggested by Mr. Stedman's saying, "There can be no real biography when the real actor is banished from the scene." But when the actor is a poet and thinker his biography consists almost entirely of his own writings, and hence, if these are preserved, he cannot be "banished" even by death.

It was thus made clear that the materials, at least, for a biography should have been in great part written by Mr. Stedman himself. The law of copyright immediately warned, because his books, and especially their splendidly illuminating Prefaces, Introductions, etc., had a personal and biographic significance, and were the well thought out and accurately worded reports of many of his most cherished intellectual conclusions. An examination of the thousands of letters, papers, and data left by Mr. Stedman gave assurance that an autobiographic biography was possible. He was, indeed, glad to say that he had never written a letter which he would be ashamed to see published.

Friendship was a distinguishing characteristic of his life, and his many friends have been helpfully generous in the making of this book. Although some of the letters, portions of the reminiscences, etc., so kindly sent us have not been quoted, they may have been indirectly not less valuable to the editors. Whenever known, my Grandfather's wishes have been loyally carried out.

"A praiseworthy reader," Mr. Stedman frequently urged, "is one who accepts an essay in its entirety, and does not hang his approval or disapproval upon a single point. . . . A work of art must be approached with the purpose of its designer always in mind."

Assenting, at last, to my requests, Dr. Gould agreed to give me his advice and help in the compilation of this work, thereby carrying into effect one of the last desires expressed by my Grandfather. For Dr. Gould's faithful editorial collaboration during the preparation of the manuscript I make glad and grateful acknowledgment.

James Herbert Morse, William Winter, William C. Church, William Dean Howells, Whitelaw Reid, George E. Woodberry—these and many others have proved by deeds that the love for their lifelong friend lives on after his death.

To the Authors Club of New York I would express our gratitude for spontaneous services generously rendered; and to Mr. Stephen Henry Thayer for perfect interest and help.

Acknowledgment is likewise due Messrs. Theodore Watts-Dunton, Austin Dobson, and Edmund Gosse.

We appreciate the courtesies of C. H. A. Bjerregaard of the Astor Library.

I thank my Mother for constant sympathy and help.

We value the reminiscences of the first years of the New York life furnished by Mr. Stedman's sister-in-law, Mrs. E. B. Stone.

Miss Alice Marsland, a devoted assistant of Mr. Stedman during the last months of his life, has made a gift of the Bibliography.

Dr. A. C. Durand, of Ithaca, New York, has given painstaking labor to an Index made after the pattern set by Mr. Stedman.

My secretary, Miss Bessie Mitchell, has placed at my service exceptional conscientiousness and ability.

With characteristic courtesy the Houghton Mifflin Company have granted the use of the excerpts from books by Mr. Stedman published by them, and I desire to make this acknowledgment of my appreciation.

To all who have given, to each—We thank you!

L. S.

September, 1910.

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LIFE AND LETTERS OF
EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

"Five hundred years of Earth are none too many, could we *retain vigor and health.* Wouldn't you like to be fifty years a traveler, fifty an inventor, fifty years a statesman—to practice painting, sculpture, oratory—and all the time a fisher, sailor, poet, author and man of the world? I should, and then might be willing to try some other sphere." E. C. S.

LIFE AND LETTERS OF EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

CHAPTER I

ANCESTRY AND BIRTH

1833–1839

Edmund Clarence Stedman wrote to an inquiring correspondent, in 1896: "The Stedman family name has long been 'rare' in this country, except around Boston, but it is surprising how many of us are beginning to crop up at last. I believe many of the Stedmans do not marry; and those that do rarely seem to have large families of children. My branch (the Connecticut) are addicted to fits of melancholy 'the Stedman blues,' and are often gray in youth—but they live as long as other people, and I believe are usually gentle and honorable and just. . . .

> *My* ancestor, Isaac Stedman, sailing from London, settled in Scituate, Massachusetts, 1636. Some of his descendants afterwards went to Hampton, Connecticut, where my grandfather, Griffin Stedman (of Hartford) was *born*. . . .
>
> Another Stedman (Robert), came from *Holland* and settled (1638) in Cambridge, Massachusetts. From him the Boston Stedmans (probably your branch), came. We surmise that the original Isaac and Robert were brothers, but can as yet obtain no evidence of it.

Isaac Stedman removed from Scituate to Boston, in 1650, where, as merchant, townsman, and farmer, he lived until his death in 1678. His great-grandson, Deacon Thomas

Stedman, Jr., bought land in Hampton, Connecticut, removing there from Muddy River, Brookline, Massachusetts. In 1761, Deacon Stedman deeded the farm of 170 acres to his son, James Stedman, and went to live on a farm in Pomfret, Connecticut. This son carried on wide farming enterprises, and was highly respected. In 1776, he was appointed captain of the military company raised at Hampton, and was in important campaigns and battles.

Thomas Stedman, a house carpenter, another son of Deacon Thomas Stedman, Jr., was Town Clerk from the organization of the town, and represented Hampton in the State Legislature 1787 and 1793—"A tall, spare, bony man—of few words, but always to the point." He married Mehitabel Griffin. Their son Griffin married Elizabeth Gordon, daughter of Alexander Gordon and Hannah H. Elderkin. This couple made their home in Hartford, Connecticut, and Griffin Stedman became a very wealthy lumber merchant, bringing his own timber down from Maine. Five children came of this union, Edmund Burke, the eldest, being born about 1800: Edmund Burke was to become the father of Edmund Clarence Stedman.

The Stedmans apparently were enterprising, studious, and pious countrymen. It is recorded that five were graduated from Harvard, and two from Yale, before 1801. Dr. Charles Ellery Stedman, a Stedman genealogist, notes:

> The trustworthy Burke (not Edmund the sublime, but the one whom Thackeray makes ridiculous) speaks of "the ancient and eminent family of Stedman established in England since 1191." In a Prussian genealogy we are told that, "Fabricius Stedman, Edinburgh, 1369," was ancestor of Susanna Stedman, daughter and heiress of Charles Stedman and Janet Neilson of Seith, his wife. The son of Sir Andrew Barton (the famous Scotch Admiral) Charles Barton, married Susanna, in 1565, and took her name and arms.

Writing of his maternal line, Mr. Stedman says:

> Yes, bless you, my family-tree has a parson on every branch.

Doubtless the most racy and historic of them all was my great-grandfather, the Reverend Aaron Cleveland. His daughter, Sarah, married my staunch old Calvinistic grandfather, David Low Dodge—himself a ruling elder and writer of lay sermons, etc., who taught me to read, and ruled a wild boy according to the old adage of "Spare the rod, spoil the child!" Of course you know all about Aaron Cleveland, poet, wit, etc., of your own State.

The following extract, concerning these relatives, has been taken from the unpublished *Reminiscences* of Mr. Stedman's mother, who was Elizabeth C. Dodge, the daughter of Sarah Cleveland and David Low Dodge:

Father's paternal great-grandfather was a clergyman from Wales—a wealthy and learned man. His only son received a liberal education in England, and inherited a large estate: but his love of horses, racing and hunting, ruined his fortunes. This love of thoroughbred horses, seems from my Father's Memoirs, to have been hereditary: his father, and himself were fond of fine horses; but, he says of the former, that "he was a man of good common sense, and had neither the means, nor desire to indulge in anything extravagant." His grandfather came to this country and married well here: lived on the remnant of his fortune in easier circumstances than he could have done in England after losing his inherited estate: "In style for that period, journeying much, and entertaining liberally as a gentleman at home." However in the course of time, he became embarrassed, had his property and silver-plate attached, and thus had little or nothing to leave his only son, my grandfather.

During the war [of the Revolution] my grandfather was engaged in business connected with it, and after peace was declared he purchased a farm at Hampton, Ct., where my father was brought up, having only the advantages of a country district school. His innate love of imparting knowledge led him early to become a teacher. It was in consequence of his being invited to open a private school for the higher branches at Norwich, Ct., that he first met my mother, who resided there with her father the Reverend Aaron Cleveland, who afterwards became pastor of the first Congregational Church of that town. He was the son of the Reverend Aaron Cleveland who took orders in the Episcopal

Church of Wales, and was appointed rector of a Church in Nova Scotia. . . .

My father was a man in every sense original: in mind, he measured head and shoulders above his peers; in character, his individuality was never questioned. Of a highly nervous organization, he, of course, was excitable in temperament—in temper even fiery. At times his smile was ineffably winning; while at other times, in other moods, he could look terrible, especially out of his eyes. Though of medium stature and weight, his whole bearing was that of one born to command, and his was indeed an imperial will. With a rare thirst for study, but without the means for instruction which he craved, his various devices to gain knowledge proved his full capability of that self-education which made him, without the privileges even of ordinary learning, a learned man. Unfortunately, a Puritanical training by his parents tinctured his whole life with religious opinionism; and, being by nature dogmatical, he was always intolerant of views differing from his own. An autocrat in his household, he was nevertheless tender in his affections—a devoted husband and father, though over-severe in parental authority. He had all the elements of popularity; was a remarkable conversationalist, and a profitable, as well as a delightful, companion; so, that as a man he was widely and enthusiastically beloved. Yet, his severity in family government, and his ever-living sense of man's superiority over woman; in short, of his kingly prerogatives by divine right, made him more feared than loved in his family; while the gentle, beautiful wife and mother of us all naturally had more than even the usual mother's share of love from her children.

Mr. Stedman used often to tell the story of the clergyman who, visiting Mr. and Mrs. David Low Dodge, the grandparents of Mr. Stedman, prayed fervently at family prayers that God would bless the "united head" of the House. Mr. Dodge arose from his knees: "Sir, there is but one head of the House, and I am the head; a united head would be a monster."

On the 18th of December, 1810, was born Elizabeth Clementine, the sixth child of these grave parents—auburn-ringleted, mischievous, wilful, who grew into an impulsive,

ELIZABETH CLEMENTINE STEDMAN
Mother of E. C. Stedman
Portrait by T. Buchanan Read

imaginative, high-spirited girl, religious, but with a scorn for the dogmas and severities of her parents' creed. From childhood she wrote verse, and always delighted in this means of expressing herself. "I cannot remember," she says, "when I first began to sing in rhyme, but it was not long after I first breathed: always easier for me to compose in verse than in prose, my compositions at school usually took that form, and my early correspondence often ran into rhyme." This natural aptitude for poetical expression grew with her years, and to be a poet became her fervent wish. Music, painting, indeed all of the arts, thrilled her with joy. Her chief happiness was found in intellectual pursuits, and in the electric give-and-take of intellectual companionship. She was petted and beloved as a child, and when she became a young woman she was an acknowledged "belle." Many years later, her eldest son said: "The gift of writing, in verse and prose, is inborn—natural—with my mother. If she had not been a beauty, with an absolute genius for social life, she would have stuck to letters, and have been a famous author."

It was in Hartford during the Autumn of 1829, while on a visit to her married sister, Mrs. Henry C. Porter, that Elizabeth met a handsome and dignified young neighbor, Major Edmund Burke Stedman. His immediate and passionate courtship, coupled with his gentle Christian nature, rapidly won her affection, if not her love, which she frankly told him had been given to a cousin, whom, because he was a cousin, she was forbidden to marry. Major Stedman impressed her parents with his eligibility, and Elizabeth, wearied by home discipline, was glad to accept the congenial and wealthy young lumber merchant, who asked for nothing, and gave all. But a misunderstanding about Major Stedman arose, and, fearing that Elizabeth's father would deny him even a sight of her, he begged her to marry him secretly. The ceremony was performed in a friendly lawyer's office; however her father was told the truth, and to gain his pardon, Elizabeth had to consent that the legal marriage should be ratified by a clergyman that *very* evening.

The Spring of 1833 found the young couple housekeeping in a comfortable home on Main Street in Hartford. The three years had brought them joy, and, in the death of a baby daughter, sorrow. On October 8th, of that year, their first son, Edmund Clarence, was born.

A gossipy and veracious letter written October 10th, from his aunt Susan Dodge to Lucinda Smith, whom the grown Edmund considered his foster mother, contains the following:

> Sister Elizabeth has also a little (what? a daughter?) no a *Son*, born on the eighth of Oct. at eight o'clock P. M. he weighs seven pounds and some over . . . he has dark hair almost black and so long.

The father wrote to the baby's Aunt Julia:

> It is with no small degree of pleasure that I inform you that on Tuesday evening at 8. oclock My dear Clementina was made the Mother of a fine Stout Boy, & you must know that we are some what pleased. After very severe suffering Clementina is as comfortable as we can expect—she seems to be perfectly happy although at first a little disappointed in not having a daughter—it is as *you* would have it. I begin to feel that I have now a responsibility resting upon me in having a little immortal committed to my care & I trust we can dedicate him to the Service of our Lord & Master Jesus Christ & pray that he may be a blessing to his parents, & an ornament to the cause of our Redeemer.

Mrs. Stedman's *Reminiscenses* continue:

> Our first-born son was baptised by the Reverend Dr. Horace Bushnell. . . . At that time our child was called by his second name—a fancy one—Clarence. He was a remarkable quiet and sedate babe; indeed he hardly ever even smiled and seldom cried. I had an elderly woman as nurse for him, who used to say that *if* he lived to be a man, he would not be an ordinary one. Emphasizing the "*if*" showed me that she did not believe he would live, and

his gravity, certainly gave pretext for such a fear, at least to a superstitious mind. She called him often the "little minister," and all his first years indicated that the child had naturally both the gift and the taste for preaching. . . .

When little Clarence was weaned, and there were prospects of his having a companion before many months, his father gave me a crowning proof of his affection, and his growing desire to promote my happiness above everything, by inviting an orphan cousin—the playmate of my childhood and the one of all my female cousins nearest my age and most beloved—who had been left homeless, to accept a home with us. Her name Lucinda was no sweeter than her disposition and character. . . . Mr. Stedman's generosity was proverbial: *all* his gifts to the poor, God only knows; for are they not written in the Book of His Remembrance? I knew enough of his charitable deeds, which he could not conceal from me, to fill any human book; though he ever strove to give, not letting his left hand know what his right did. How many widows' hearts he made to sing for joy in the holidays! How many fatherless ones did he give cause for thankfulness indeed on our annual feasts of "Thanksgiving!" Never did he leave home for even a few days without bringing back with him presents for every soul in his house; the servants especially were always liberally remembered, and each loved him as few masters are loved. . . .

In August 1835 our second son was born, whom we named Charles Frederick, a fine child, promising to live and thrive to the full term of man, so far as might be judged from his lusty appearance.

In May 1835, Mr. and Mrs. Stedman took a long lease of a house on High Street "commanding an extensive and beautiful view." The days passed swiftly, and with happiness, until Major Stedman, never of robust health, caught a sudden, severe cold, which resulted in pneumonia, a fatal disease for one of a consumptive lineage. He recovered from this attack, but his health from that period began to fail.

"As Autumn approached," his wife says, "a consultation of physicians was called, and he was advised to sail for the Tropics before cold and frost came on. Here was a painful dilemma: I could not accompany him with my new born babe, and a child of two years, as Edmund Clarence was then, and how could I let the husband and father go without us, or how could he be persuaded to leave us behind him, and sail away in his precarious state to a land of strangers? The doctors agreed that it would only hinder his recovery to have his wife and babes exposed to the perils and discomforts of a long sea voyage, that it would be preposterous for us to attempt going with the invalid, who would be better off having a man-nurse to accompany him. Santa Cruz was the destination they selected as most fitting in respect of climate. . . ."

It was a difficult and sad parting, but neither realized the graveness of this separation. From the day of sailing, Major Stedman grew rapidly worse. The diary kept by his nurse on shipboard shows that his gentle, trustful, and religious spirit persisted to the end. His last letter to his beloved wife, written November 17, 1835, is filled with thoughts for her welfare, for her salvation,—"Don't let my dear little Clarence forget his father,—let him look at my portrait and he may not."

Major Stedman died on board the ship *Emily*, at midnight, December 4, 1835, and was buried at sea. The only way of despatching these sad tidings to his little family at Hartford was by means of slow sailing vessels, so that it was four weeks before the waiting anxious wife knew that she was a widow and her babies fatherless.

"Early the following Spring," Mrs. Stedman writes, "my beautiful home was broken up; all that fine furniture sold, and, accompanied by my faithful Lucinda, I removed with my children to father's new home at Plainfield, N. J. He had purchased a farm of about two hundred acres, with a fine house and grounds, and a smaller dwelling for his farmer's family. From our piazza and windows, on a commanding elevation, a mile distant from the town, there was a panoramic view of Plainfield, and the surrounding country, with the hills in the rear. The place was called by my father Cedar Brook, the name of a running stream that had once been bordered by cedar trees, which coursed through the grounds, and gave double value to the farm."

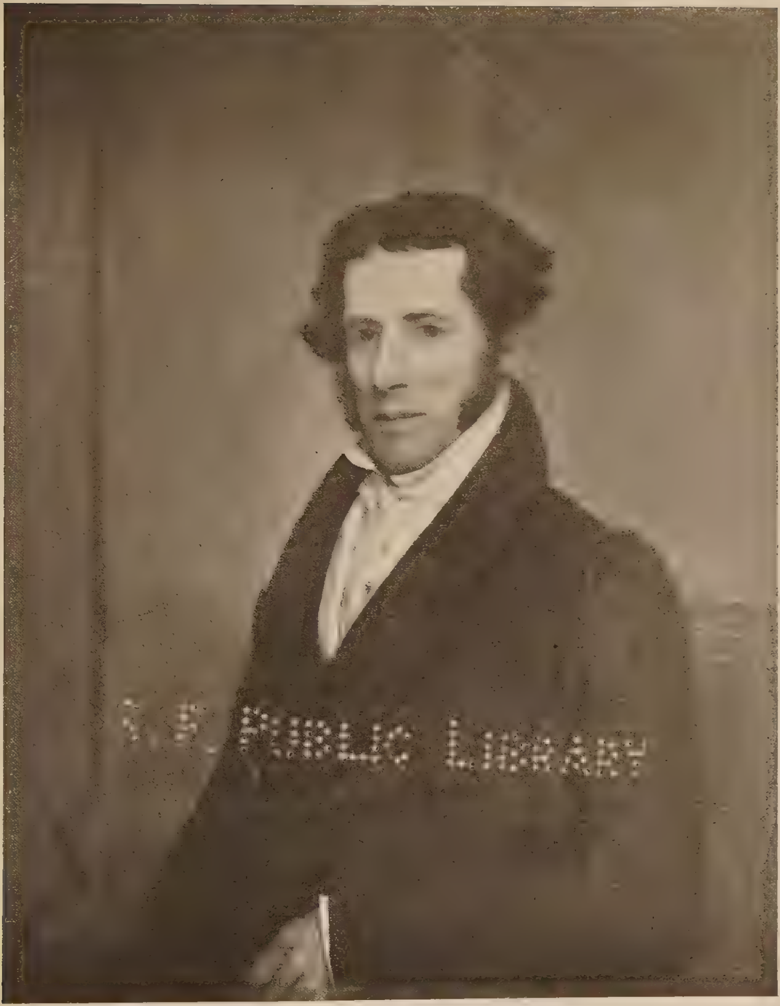
A description of the customs at Cedar Brook Farm, at the period when little Edmund lived there, is given by his boyhood playmate and cousin, William Dodge Porter:

> The house was a large two-story frame building, with double wings, the left one having downstairs but one room, known as the large parlour, extending the entire width of the building, and was only opened on state occasions. We children always considered it a special privilege when allowed to open the door, stand on the threshold, and even look within, but we seldom dared to enter. On the walls hung four pictures of Bible scenes from the life of Joseph, and on each of the two half tables, lay two bound volumes of the magazine, entitled, *New York Albion*. . . . There were no furnaces in the house, the only fuel used was wood, and every night on the little stand in the dining room, there were placed two dipped tallow candles, which Grandmother made herself, and these were inserted in two plated candlesticks. Grandfather David L. Dodge sat on one side of the stand and read, Grandmother knitted on the other. At exactly nine o'clock, the servants were called in to evening worship, then the coals in the fire were raked together, covered with ashes; the candles were extinguished; and every one in the house went directly to bed.
>
> The farm was quite large and every day Grandfather spent part of his time in going from one point to another in order to see that the men employed were competent for, and faithful in, their work; but he was also a great student and spent part of his time in both reading and writing; and when any of the relatives came out to Plainfield on a visit, the first question asked after supper was always "Did you bring a New York paper with you?" Then while he read the paper, no one was allowed to speak. Grandfather claimed that by keeping up with the news of the day, he could better understand the progress which the kingdom of God was making upon the earth, and he wrote and left for his descendants, three large manuscripts: one an exposition of the Book of Revelation, one upon Family Government, and one upon War as being inconsistent with the Religion of Jesus Christ. I read most of these aloud to him, from day to day, in order to detect any possible errors.

Grandmother Dodge was one of the seven mothers who, in 1826, organized the New York City Maternal Association. One article in their Constitution was that "as the birthday of each child occurred the Mother of that child, should spend the day in special fasting and prayer, for the conversion of that child." Grandmother had her hands full also, for beside the general care of the house, there was a large dairy, which needed constant supervision of the milk, cream, and butter churning. Every Friday was the great baking day of the week. The large brick oven, after being thoroughly heated by a fire made of small sticks, soon became a mass of glowing coals, which needed the closest watching; and then there went into it, by means of a long wooden shovel, the pan of Pork and Beans; the iron pot of Boston Brown Bread; loaves of White Bread and Biscuit, the large dish of Indian Pudding; the Pies of at least two kinds, generally Apple and Custard; and, last, but not least, the pans of scalloped Cookies, made especially for us children. I can taste them even now, as they were given us, hot from the oven.

I always enjoyed watching Grandmother making candles. A narrow piece of board had a small hole perforated in the end, and in this was inserted a small rod, around which were twisted several lengths of cotton wicking, and when a number had been so prepared, then, by means of a handle, they were dipped, one after another, into the kettle of hot tallow; then, hung up to dry, having pans underneath to catch the dripping. So soon as the tallow hardened, they were dipped again and again, until the needed thickness was obtained, finally being hung up in the cellar to harden, and the next day were ready for use.

Every day, all through the summer, in the great fire-place in the dining-room were great tufts of branches, flowers and leaves to cheer the eye; but so soon as the frosts of autumn set in the fire was kindled, which was never allowed to go out until late in the spring. Each morning the two labouring men brought in three heavy logs, one after another, and these formed the background; in front were lighter sticks, and between them the smaller pieces, all held in place by the great iron bar in front; then the ashes were raked open, until the live coals were reached, and soon there was a roaring fire, which we children, sitting on our crickets, loved to watch, as did also Nero the dog and Jennie the cat (who were devoted to Grandfather, and would follow him into the fields as



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MAJOR EDMUND BURKE STEDMAN
Father of E. C. Stedman

he walked) one lying on each side of the brass fender. There was no clock in the dining room, there was only a large silver watch which hung by the side of the mantel-piece, and which Grandfather wound up each morning before family prayers. In the summer there were many flies, and we all, including visitors, used to range ourselves in line, and waving our handkerchiefs, and marching together, we drove the flies out of the open window, and then sat down to our meals in peace. On Sunday and Wednesday morning the breakfast was always fried yellow mush, and we all had dessert, custard pie, on *those two days only*; no child might ask for two "helps."

In summer the Sabbath and Fast Days to us children seemed very long, for the Grandparents sometimes rose on those days at half past four, and we had an early light breakfast, and oh it seemed so very long before the morning service. There was only a short intermission at noon, and after the close of the second service came the long, long afternoon and evening, with no sports, no children's papers, very few books. Our one privilege was to walk slowly down the lane, at the foot of the garden, but not out of it, and then slowly return.

Under a great chestnut tree which lifted protecting branches between the Cedar Brook house and the road, Edmund and Charley found their first playmates in the little cousins who often visited their home.

In the summer of 1836, Edmund, who was adored by his foster mother, Lucinda Smith, made a visit with her to some friends in Auburn, New York. "I feel greatly obliged," writes Mrs. Stedman, "to your dear mother and friends for receiving my dear little Edmund with so much kindness. I hope you, dear L.— will make him a very good boy & that he will make as little trouble as possible. . . . Kiss dear, dear little Edmund for me, tell him not to forget Mama & be a very good boy."

Later, Edmund's mother became impatient for her boy's return:

> Seven weeks yesterday since you left me—no very *comfortable* length of time I'm thinking—I almost forget how little E——

looks & I rather guess his *straw* cap will be a little mortifying to your pride if you should happen to be over taken with a snow squall. . . . Poor dear little E—— will get to be a man before his petticoats are off—you must know my arrangements are all made for you to go back to N. York (at least in a few days) with him to have his little limbs immersed in "trouserloons," & you will have to hurry or his third birthday which is to be this important era will be passed.

Edmund's third birthday was "an important era" for on that day, no doubt wishing to show his appreciation of the new dignity bestowed by loving hands upon him, Edmund, who had hitherto seemed unable to do so, now spoke plainly for the first time.

His grandfather Dodge was very stern, and a large closet in his room, where "corporeal punishment" was administered, was always recalled with horror by Mr. Stedman who, many years later, made a "pious" pilgrimage to Plainfield, and sought this closet, reliving his childhood's terror. "Elizabeth," Mr. Dodge would say, "you tend to Charley, and I will take Edmund into the boot-closet." Such may have happened one day when Edmund, saying his catechism, and asked "What is the chief end of man?" piped out, with a quick remembrance of a saying that he had read in an old almanac,

To spend all he gets
And get all he can.

Perhaps the rod was spared, but, unutterably horrified, the grandfather led the little lad to his mother: "Elizabeth, Satan has entered into the child."

Nevertheless, the days passed happily for the boys. Here, Edmund, seated on a footstool in the chimney corner, with a chair in front of him for a desk, with the shovel, tongs, bellows, and hearthbrush, as his classmates, learned to read under the persevering, straightforward tuition of his grandfather. An old Bible, published by Daniel D. Smith, New York, 1828, bears this note pencilled in 1882:

This Bible is the first book which I remember. I used to lie flat on the floor, and pore over its pictures, when a very young child in Plainfield, N. J. ("Cedar Brook" Farm),—and now it all comes back to me—after 43 years.

"He was a remarkably precocious child from birth, and a very peculiar one," his mother informs us. "He could read well at four years, and write at six. As soon as he could speak, he lisped in rhyme, and as soon as he could write, he gave shape and measure to his dreams. Often on being put to bed, when he was between five and six, he would get on his knees, bury his head in the pillow, and if told to lie down, and go to sleep, would answer, "Let me alone, please, the *poetry* is coming."

As Edmund progressed in his studies, his mother also taught him, and then he went for a few months to a school in the village. "If you see a Mr. Wallace," he wrote, when he was twenty-one, to his gentle grandmother, "who was my teacher 15 years ago, tell him I remember him well, and often think of him. I can see now the little brown-covered books from which we learned our 'tables,' and the magic-lantern with which he astonished and delighted me once, when on a visit to his house. If I can I will try and spend *one* day in Plainfield this summer, and see all the spots I so well remember, tho' I know they will look *smaller* than they did when I used to take daily walks by both the Websters, the hatter's, the Misses Anderson on the corner, the parsonage where Mr. Bond lived, and then across the road to the church basement, where I was gradually promoted from Mr. Davidson's, in the rear, to Mr. Wallace's in the front. Yes, I remember it all, and the Academy, with the cupola on the top, where the big boys studied Latin and —flew kites!"

When Edmund was five, his little cousins, the children of Henry C. Porter, came to live within a mile of Cedar Brook, and then he had playmates every day. He was a fastidiously neat child, and never would join in any games that would "muss his clothes," which were in perfect taste.

So, when sliding down hill, little Henry Porter would often make Edmund sit in front on the sled, and then purposely the sled would be overturned. At Edmund's outburst of concern, Henry would tease, "O, the Rahway Road Dandy!" To which Edmund would invariably answer, excitedly, "I ain't the Rahway Road Dandy, I'm my mother's little darling."

And this mother! She was and ever remained his idol and ideal. In 1859, he wrote these lines in a sonnet, which embodied the first memory he cherished of her.

> She seemed an angel to our infant eyes
> Once, when the glorifying moon revealed
> Her, who at evening by our pillow kneeled,—
> Soft-voiced and golden-haired, from holy skies
> Flown to her loves on wings of Paradise,—
>
> . . . .
>
> Perchance the years have changed her—yet alone
> This picture lingers; still she seems to me
> The fair young angel of my infancy.

At her death, thirty years later, he wrote to Mr. T. B. Aldrich:

> I often have wished that you could meet my mother . . . she was a Christian—but of the *New Testament* breed, thoroughly liberal, and believing that a Merciful Deity, would "hesitate" before damning poets and other gentle sinners. Above all, she was a *woman*—with all a woman's heart, impulse, delightful caprice—to the last: intensely human, and intensely loyal to those whom she once accepted. She accepted them at first sight, or not at all,—for she saw through people at a glance.
>
> In every way, as in every point of form and feature, she was a thoroughbred. She had choice, aristocratic tastes and ways—detested stuffy or "strong-minded" women,—will always be associated in my memory with things delicate and rare. It was a lasting calamity for me that I was torn from her in youth, and mixed and moiled with struggles in a rude, coarse environment.

The year 1839 was sad and eventful for Edmund. A step that had long been agitating his mother's heart was now resolved upon. Major Stedman's father, Griffin Stedman, did not feel bound to contribute to the support of his dead son's wife and children, and declared that if Mrs. Stedman would send the lads to Norwich, Connecticut, to be placed under the guardianship of his brother, James Stedman, they should be properly educated, and he would will to them, to be divided between them, when they should attain majority, the amount he had designed for their father.

Mrs. Stedman, at first, refused positively to agree to this separation, and, hoping to earn enough to support her sons and herself, had begun to contribute prose and verse to *The Knickerbocker*, *Godey's Lady's Book*, and *Graham's Magazine*. "My earliest recollections," her Edmund has said, "are of my young mother writing poetry for the magazines, with her two half-orphan children sitting at her feet."

The mother soon found that this work afforded her only "pin money." She began to feel, moreover, that with their uncle, her children would have many advantages, especially of education, which they could not obtain in Plainfield. So, when Edmund was six years old, she says, "After a fearful struggle between feeling and duty, I at length yielded to the reiterated demands of my family counsellors. . . . A year later, his younger brother, my baby, was also torn from me."

CHAPTER II

BOYHOOD AT NORWICH TOWN

1839–1849

Late in the summer of 1839, Edmund was taken by Frederick Tracy, a friend of James Stedman, from the home in Plainfield. The carriage and boat ride to New York, the subsequent ride to Hartford, where he spent the night, interested the lad, who was vibrantly awake to every new scene: his extreme grief at parting from his mother was manfully borne. Early Saturday morning, he went by stage from Hartford to Norwich, baiting at Colchester. It was sundown when they reached the Tracy home, with its old box-bordered walk, above the Adam's Tavern, on Bean Hill—Deacon Stedman's house was a mile farther down the turnpike. As Sabba'day, which lasted from Saturday sundown until that same hour the next day, was not a proper one for a journey, nor for an arrival at Squire Stedman's, Edmund spent his first Norwich night at Bean Hill, and waited there till Sunday sundown, when Big Tom and Little Annie Stedman came to fetch him. In 1906, he wrote the then silver haired old lady: "I never forget you, even for a day. I never forget that you were the girl who came with your brother to the Tracy's one Sunday evening, and took a freckled little boy to her home in Norwich; that you were like an older sister to me in all my lonely and reckless boyhood."

A characterization of his new guardian, written many years later by Mr. Stedman, may well be given:

> My great uncle, James Stedman, was about sixty years old, when, in my sixth year, I entered the family. His hair was then a silver gray, very soft, and brushed straight back from a noble

forehead. Doubtless it had whitened years before, for my grandfather's family in Hartford were known as the "gray Stedmans," and James Stedman was an embodiment of the typical traits of the Clan. He was almost painfully conscientious, reverent, and a fine specimen of manhood, physically and mentally. Though ordinarily mild, his wrath at anything mean or dishonest found vehement expression. His sense of justice was extreme, his legal equipment profound, and his humanity so great that he exerted himself to reconcile litigants rather than to extend his practice. An excess of modesty impeded him as a jury lawyer. He should have been on the Bench. His logical mind and fairness, and the general respect in which he was held, would have made him an ideal judge.

But I have always thought it a pity that he left the shadow of the New Haven elms. If he had remained at Yale College, he surely would have risen to a professorship, and perhaps even higher. He was a favorite pupil of the first Timothy Dwight, whom he greatly revered, and in fact he bore a personal resemblance to the famous President and Theologian, and was akin to him in mental virility and in genius as a teacher.

On my eighth birthday, my uncle, with much ceremony, put into my hand the quaint Latin grammar, which he had used a half century earlier; and from that day until I entered Yale interested himself in my "*academe*." I remember him to the last, reading his old Greek Testament on Sundays, with the love of an ancient scholar for the text, and for associations which there was none to share with him.

As his older sons prospered in business, and brought from the cities in summer their families to board at the "homestead," there was a "numerous house," and happiness and good fare. But the master's means were limited, and the full income from his clerkship and from his guardianship of the youths under his charge was required for the expenses of the household. . . .

In politics Mr. Stedman was a Clay Whig, and I remember his passionate interest in the Clay-Polk contest of 1844, and his grief when it finally became certain that Clay was defeated. But he repudiated Webster's Compromise of the Slavery question, was outraged by the Fugitive Slave Law, and unquestionably would have joined the new Republican party had his life been prolonged throughout the year.

And what had this guardian then to say of Edmund:

> You ask, [he wrote the mother, in 1841,] whether he is obedient and submissive to those who superintend his studies and conduct. To this question I can give a general answer in the affirmative, to which there are as few exceptions as are found in the case of most good boys, that is, boys who bear that character in the society they are conversant with.
>
> Edmund is not perfect and what child of his age, or of any other age is? He loves to have *his own way*; this is no uncommon thing in youths of his age even though that way may not be right, especially if it *seem to* be right. He is not stubborn; but generally yields to conviction (if he is wrong) and is penitent and shows that his sorrow is sincere, by reformations. He sometimes uses acts of deception to cover a fault, but as he finds they are not always, perhaps not often, successful, he appears to be convinced that *honesty is the best policy* and I think he is decidedly reforming himself in this particular. He appears to have a just conception of the sinfulness of this fault; but this is not always present with him in season to prevent the effects of sudden temptation.
>
> This is his greatest fault and requires constant watchfulness to keep him from having occasion to fall into it. I endeavour to induce him to place full confidence in me, that he may be more inclined to confess, than conceal, his faults. If I should prove successful in this, I know his reformation will be full and entire. I have stated this to you because it is proper you should know his character, that you may aid us, as I know you will endeavour to do, in making him in every sense a good boy; and because you have expressed a desire to be informed of his faults as well as his merits. A few words from his mother on this subject (without informing him that it has been brought directly to your attention) as well as on the subject of character and conduct in general, will I doubt not have a happy effect upon him; for his heart is full of filial feelings and confidence.
>
> He is a boy of great promise, and this has perhaps enlisted our feelings more completely in his welfare if anything were necessary to give additional impulse to the movings of the heart in favor of an orphan whose father was so much beloved that his memory will long, we trust, be most fervently cherished by us. . . .

Edmund sometimes appears inclined to exercise certain imaginary rights incident, as he supposes, to primogeniture.

Undoubtedly the child was rebellious, yet he never then complained. There was only the everlasting heartache for his mother's presence; and the fervent wish to be "her comforter." "I can assure you," he wrote, after seventy years, "that the difference between having your ears washed by a mother, and having a stern old great-aunt (Puritan) perform that ceremony is—awful."

Half whimsically he sometimes recalled his first New England Thanksgiving dinner. There were thirty at table, and among so many the little newcomer was overlooked. As the children were not allowed to speak, unless spoken to, little Edmund waited and hoped in silence, while the good dinner disappeared around him. He stood it as long as he could, and then buried his face in his little bib, shaking with muffled sobs, for he did not dare to cry aloud. Finally, some one noticed the small sufferer and filled his plate; but his appetite had gone because of what his sensitive heart felt to be a terrible slight.

The year following Edmund's arrival at Norwich Town, when it was decided to have his brother Charley come also to be brought up by James Stedman, Edmund was permitted to go to Plainfield with Big Tom to fetch the baby brother. This was a supreme event, and the subsequent visits, which Edmund was granted twice a year, were "dreamed over all the rest of the time." In 1841, the remembered sweetness of one of these "perfectly happy" visits was so tragic to his little hungering heart that, to divert his mind, he was given a short holiday which was never forgotten. Of it he speaks to a kinswoman forty-seven years later: "First: let me say that there is nothing absurd in your telling me of our relationship, for it recalls to me a pleasant episode of my youth. When I was a forlorn little boy, under a guardian's care in Norwich, Connecticut, my great-uncle (and guardian) took me on a two days' trip to Springfield, where we visited a Mr. Stedman Williams—doubtless your father or grandfather; probably the latter, as the only girls I remember were some 'cousins' named Clarke—one of whom, very pretty, was failing with consumption. Mr. W. lived in a neat little house near the Cemetery, and I wandered through the latter with poetic delight—never having seen anything so pretty before. That little visit is one of the pleasant things remembered of my dreary childhood. So, although I have no cause to love the Stedmans as a clan, you see you have a sort of claim upon me."

Saturday afternoons, Edmund had to stay indoors to learn his catechism—this began the severe Sabba'day, and the Meeting-house, to which, on Sunday, he trudged beside his great-aunts, three times there, and three times back, gave lasting memories. Miss Margaret Fuller of Norwich recalls that Mr. Stedman, in speaking of it, used to say:

> Mr. Stevens who lived near the entrance to the burying ground lane was the choirmaster. That choir could be heard in New York—twenty-five men and twenty-five women; trebles, basses, seconds, and altos—males on one side, females on the other. They sang through their noses—there was no doubt that they sang with their lungs. The women carried the air; those who fell a little short in style were scored as seconds. The basses sang no air at all, and the altos soared off by themselves on a high scale of flats.
>
> Mr. Simon Huntington, the great-grandson of Washington's aid-de-camp, was as straight as an arrow and a fine man. It afforded me the greatest pleasure to watch his Adam's apple during his participation in the church service. There never was an Adam's apple that had such a wonderful range! It worked up and down like a human pump handle. It was always on time. It descended so low that to dream it would rise again seemed hopeless;—then, when all seemed lost, it reappeared, slowly, grandly, with a masterful steadiness which left no doubt but that it could have gone on rising through eternity, if so it pleased.
>
> The Meeting-house had a round dome of a sounding board swung in the middle of it. The pews were square (I remember how delighted we were when we saw the black walnut "slips"

going in) with seats, as I recall it, around two sides. My aunts had wooden and brass foot-stoves, and we children sat around on footstools on the floor. Of course we could not see anything, when seated. The folk from Yantic sat on the Yantic side of the church, and "we uns" sat on the Norwich Town side—which was considered more select. At the time that I went to college, I am sure that there could not have been a furnace in the church, for at Yale I recall my pleasure and interest in the registers from which the heat arose.

In 1887, Mr. W. H. Rideing, who was preparing his "Boyhood of Famous Authors," visited Mr. Stedman at New Castle, New Hampshire, in order to obtain certain facts for a sketch about little Edmund. After Mr. Rideing had left, Mr Stedman jotted down the following notes for his guest, because, as he writes, "I pitied you so much as one having to make bricks without straw, that I have made an attempt to give you something from which, without exactly using any of my garrulous words, you may glean some fodder:"

It now occurs to me that, after all, you got nothing of what you came for—i. e., nothing to help you, outside of your own artistic handling and imagination, make any sort of a paper about the boyhood of my uninteresting self. In T. B. A.'s case, you had the best boy's story ever written: and, now I think of it, for scrapes and experiences, my own "bad-boy" hood was about the same as his own, and in very near a second "Rivermouth."

I had thought of nothing to tell you. And what does one know of what he *really* was and seemed as a boy? Those who then tended him are the ones to cross-examine. There are still folk in Norwich (pronounced Norridge—to rhyme with porridge—*Vide* "Mother Goose") who could tell much more of my unusual and perverse boyhood than I can myself.

But I do recall that you asked me who were my friends and mates, and that I only mentioned my fishing, trapping, and hunting with Ira. I did have, after all, more boys *with* me, daily, than is usual outside of boarding-school. My great-uncle and guardian had a reputation for managing boys, and there were many reared and educated in his house. Three pairs of us were there during my stay—from my sixth to my fifteenth year—after which I was transferred to Yale. Three pairs of brothers—Emilio and Virgilio Lasaga (Cubans), Hunt and Turville Adams, Edmund and Charles Stedman; the elder brother in each case two years older than the younger, and each three the same age. We were a rather important and dominant sextette in the town—not a place for nutting, berrying, etc., that we did not know and forage in; not a scrape—nor adventure in which we did not unite. I was a little the oldest of the lot, and probably the leader. Certainly I presented all the petitions to the old gentleman, got credit for all the scrapes, and got most of the thrashings—deservedly, I doubt not, for the others hadn't my imagination, adventurous turn, rebellious independence. I was a great inventor of stories—a raconteur—we slept four in a room, and I had to manufacture tales for the rest after the candle was out. The faculty left me as I grew up. Are novelists, then, examples of "arrested development"?

My grand old uncle Stedman, a fine scholar, noble heart, but also rigid in old-fashioned ways, taught me Latin, Greek; made me his companion in his law-office, his gardening, his little farm; I dare say loved me more than he showed—as his own sons had not taken to the scholarly studies he still cared for. But we were often at open war. I now deeply regret that I was not old enough, or sensible enough, to understand him at his worth. My constant scrapes and rebellion must have tried him beyond measure. But I always was the natural companion of old men—old scholars—and born with a reverence for them. Years afterward I was the friend and private Secretary of the fine old Roman, Edward Bates—and was to him all I *ought* to have been to James Stedman of Norwich Town.

We lived in Norwich *Town* (two miles from the *City*), the hive of the Huntingtons, Trumbulls, Perkinses, Hydes, and the birthplace of Benedict Arnold. The quaintest colonial town in New England—full of old customs and traditions. Curfew—9 P. M.—for centuries. Thanksgiving celebrated as nowhere else in New England. Thanksgiving night, bonfires—barrels strung on masts sixty feet high—stolen and begged by gangs of boys from the different districts, for months before. Am pretty sure I was, though small, tough, and the captain of my set of boys. Cannot remember ever being afraid. Never undertook a thing, good

NORWICH, CONNECTICUT, IN 1846
From an old print

or—I am sorry to say— bad, that I didn't carry through at any expense of labor or suffering.

I was a wretched despised hand at any games without a secondary motive. Couldn't play ball, for instance. Was a splendid swimmer, and good runner and jumper and always fighting, a good sportsman.

From my earliest remembrance I made poetry All of the Cleveland blood do—bad cess to them! I was a natural writer, an insatiate reader—especially of fiction, adventure, poetry. Of course I got hold of all the *great* boy's books, of the Robinson Crusoe type, read by stealth the *Arabian Nights* and Fairy Tales, and *believed* them. Went alone over the woodlands, in early years, hoping to meet some Genie or Fairy. Did *not* believe in the terrors of the Calvinism about me. Had to learn the Shorter Catechism, most of the Bible, etc., etc., go to Church three times Sunday. . . .

My earliest poet, Scott. Afterwards, got hold of Byron, and Shakespeare verse. Then Coleridge, Shelley and Keats, developed my sense of the beautiful and spiritual in poetry.

Looking back, I can see that, while among kindred who did their duty faithfully, I was reared in the worst possible atmosphere for a boy like myself to get the right—i. e. the *indicated*—training. Doubtless, my strongest trials were first, an inborn and passionate love of *beauty*—of the beautiful. I was eager to draw, to learn music, etc., and was restricted to my "studies"; secondly, a love of adventure; third, love of nature and books in equal proportions.

'Tis a bad thing to separate a child from his mother, and from his natural *habitat.*

Finally, I was always in love with some little girl, and with larger ones as I grew larger. Don't think any of them cared for me, except the heroine of "The Doorstep" and "Seeking the Mayflower."

This little girl steps from a letter written one Spring day in 1888:

Being free at last to take a week of rest at "Kelp Rock"—whither we go in the morning—what can I do so well, as a stirrup-message, to tell you how straight you went to my heart with your wondrous, ideal, fairy-land spray of arbutus! That unprecedented thing of beauty knew that it was growing blooms and perfume for a poet who had chanced to sing the praises of its race, and that a nature-loving and much-beloved member of our Class was to find it and convey it to me.—Yes: I hunted the Trailing Arbutus (we called it Arbutus in Yankeedom) with my first sweetheart. Ere long I'll give you a book with the poem I wrote about her and it, long years afterward—"Seeking the Mayflower." Even now, in my mind's eye,

I see the village dryad kneel,
  Trailing her slender fingers through
The knotted tendrils, as she lifts
  Their pink, pale flowers to view.

Once more I dare to stoop beside
  The dove-eyed beauty of my choice,
And long to touch her careless hair,
  And think how dear her voice.

In 1909 it was his granddaughter's pleasure to meet a gentle, lovely friend of those—yes, sometimes, happy days. "I believe *you* were the doorstep girl?" half to herself his granddaughter said. Did not that tempting blush of long ago appear, as the whispered answer came, "I don't just remember that *it* was ever on the doorstep." Could there be a prettier bit of autobiography than his poem by that name?

The conference-meeting through at last,
  We boys around the vestry waited
To see the girls come tripping past
  Like snow-birds willing to be mated.

. . . .

The little hand outside her muff,—
  O sculptor, if you could but mould it!—
So lightly touched my jacket-cuff,
  To keep it warm I had to hold it.

. . . .

A cloud passed kindly overhead,
  The moon was slyly peeping through it,
Yet hid its face, as if it said,
  "Come, now or never! do it! *do it!*"

My lips till then had only known
  The kiss of mother and of sister,
But somehow, full upon her own
  Sweet, rosy, darling mouth,—I kissed her!

Perhaps 't was boyish love, yet still,
  O listless woman, weary lover!
To feel once more that fresh, wild thrill
  I'd give—but who can live youth over?

Some of the letters written by Edmund to his mother, during these early years, are given, believing that the reader will agree that no mirror can reflect more accurately his affectionate and loyal nature, his keen observation, his valiant spirit, and development. He was six years and a half old at the date of the first letter, and the reader may be interested in the beginning attempts at accurate spelling and painstaking punctuation, which was to become a fastidious factor in the work of his later years.

NORWICH, May 5, 1840

MY DEAR MOTHER

I was very glad to have a letter from you but there was one thing in it that stung me to the heart it was that you were sick. I trust that our knot of love is not broken by distance. I pray every night for you, brother, grandfather, and grandmother. Do not cry any more for it will only make you worse. I try not to do wrong and am *very sorry* for the untruths I told. whenever I do anything wrong I try to confess it. Dear mother I know I can comfort you (though I am away) by being a good boy and I try to give you that comfort. Do you think you are getting better? I shall soon go to Hartford and then I shall ask Grandfather if I can come and see you. I guess he will say yes, when I tell him you are sick don't you? and then I will try to comfort you, and I hope you will get well—I find it now a delightful place in Norwich and have many cousins here. I get along very well in my studies and learn a large Geography and a very hard Arithmatic. Uncle Stedman is going to give me a little garden where I can plant any thing I want. Miss Rebecca Townsend my old Sunday School teacher has left town, and

Miss Lucy Lathrop has taken her place, & I try to recite my lessons good. Please give much love to dear little Charley and all my friends.

From your affectionate son
EDMUND C. STEDMAN

NORWICH October 5 1841

MY DEAR MOTHER

I was very glad to receive the letter you wrote me last. We have now a vacation, and I study at home. I learn a part of my Sabbath school lesson, and study a lesson in History, and cipher some every day. Charles learns a hymn, and spelling lesson, and has just commenced making figures. I am ciphering in division. Charles and I have a store in our play time. We keep hazelnuts, Beans, oil clholh, sewing silk, corn stalk candy, and a variety of other things

I love to read the Bible as much as I used to. I did not go to church Sunday because it was so rainy, But Mr Arms came here Monday on some business and told me where the text was. It was in Romans the fifteenth chapter and fourth verse.

Grandmother [1] died on the 26th day of August. She was a very old lady. She was 89 years old. I went to the funeral but Charles did not go because he was not well enough. Mrs Williams the old lady who lived here when you was here died on the eleventh of September. She was 77 years old. We miss her very much. Charles is now entirely well and is gaining flesh and colour. I am well too, and we enjoy ourselves together very much. We should like to know what name Aunt Melissa gives her child.

Uncle Stedman has been attending Court in New London for three weeks past but is now returned and is very busy. Please give our best love to all our friends in Plainfield. We shall not forget you my dear Mother although we are separated from you

ever your affectionate sons
EDMUND & CHARLES

On November 16, 1841, Edmund's mother was married to William Burnet Kinney, the proprietor and editor of the *Newark Daily Advertiser*, who had at first become attracted to the charming young widow through her literary work, and correspondence.

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[1] Meaning my great-aunt Stedman's mother (Carew).—E. C. S.

The *Reminiscenses* of Mrs. Kinney read:

> My own little sons were too young to be present at my marriage; but the following week I went with their new father to visit them at Norwich, and we spent Thanksgiving-day at their guardian's. I was greatly comforted for their loss, by finding my darlings well cared for under the motherly ministrations of two excellent ladies, and in charge of so trustworthy a man. But Oh! it was hard to part with them again, especially as the eldest, my born poet-baby, rebelled against my leaving him; and never did he become reconciled to our separation. Like all children, both boys were delighted with the idea of having a father—the poor little fellows had never known their own—and begged piteously to be taken to his home. Had Mr. Kinney seconded their wish, I verily believe that, despite my former consent to the arrangement that was only made for their good, I should have granted their prayer, though now I had not the legal right to do so. But, to my disappointment Mr. Kinney entirely concurred in the plan of their being brought up by their grandfather Stedman's brother and fitted by him for college.

Before 1844, two little sisters were born, which made Edmund very happy. The letters continue:

NORWICH JANUARY 7th 1842.

MY DEAR MOTHER

I was very much gratified on receiving your kind letter and beautiful paper. I began to fear that some accident had befallen you, but I was very glad to hear that you arrived safely in Newark and that my Grand parents, and old Nero were well. Santa Claus visited us both Christmas and New Years, at the former he gave us only some Candy, but at the latter some Raisins, Candy and Money. To celebrate New Years, we had a parcel of walnuts & candy and passed them around, but the folks would not take much. To celebrate Christmas, we had a little party of some of the neighboring children. Dear Mother I knew that you did not forget me for I knew that you loved me better than that. I am very impatient for spring to come, and have been waiting and waiting, and going to the Post Office, for the Daily Advertiser, but none came. Dear Mother here is a piece of poetry that I wrote.

Both Christmas and Newyears,
Were very happy days.
For part the time they lasted,
I was playing pretty plays.
And reading pretty books,
With very pleasant looks.
O New Years was a happy day,
A day for merry mirth and play.

Aunt, Uncle and all our cousins unite with us in sending love to you we hope to hear from you soon again.

Ever believe me your affectionate son
EDMUND C. STEDMAN

NORWICH February 9th 1843

DEAR MOTHER,

Since I last wrote you Grandfather Stedman has been here. He was very glad to see us, and spoke to me respecting the portrait of father. He says that if you are willing to sell it he will buy it to keep for Charles and me when we are twenty one. Though not so strong as before his sickness he is in good health and fine spirits.

My studies are the same as when I wrote last. Charles studies Geography, Philosophy, Arithmetic, Writing and Spelling, in all of which he gets along very well. He went over to Cousin Thomas' store the other day and saw a very fine sled, he immediately set his heart upon getting it, and Uncle (who is very kind to us) told him that if he would get the medal every day in February he would buy it for him. he is trying very hard and I think he will succeed.

We have now snow on the ground from one and a half to two feet deep. It snowed hard all Sunday and Sunday night. I did not go to the Office Monday or Teusday for there was not a good path on Monday. and Uncle was not very well on Tuesday and did not go himself. Now the sleighing is excellent and the sleigh-bells jingle merrily. We boys have the promise of a sleigh-ride before the snow leaves us. If, however, makes the promise conditional. Can you guess what the condition is? O the old one, you will say, always expressed or understood, *If we are good boys*. Well, we will get the ride. The S. S. Moniter says many things against La Fontain's Fables. It says that there are many things vulgar and even profane in them, but I have not found any. If I do find any thing bad in them I will let you know.

Charles and I are well, and we send much love. Please give sister a kiss for me. Tell Father, I hope I shall be able bye and bye to write something for his Paper, and so become a correspondent of the Editor.

I have written to the Editor of the S. S. Moniter and sent him answers to Enigmas No 2 by C. O. A. and No 3 by L. L. No 2 is a very difficult one, but No 3 is as easy as A. B. C. I think the author of No 3 must be a very *L*ittle *L*add. We are all well. Good bye, Dear Mother, till your next letter comes.

Your affectionate son,
E. C. S.

NORWICH March 9th 1843

MY DEAR MOTHER,

Charles and I were very much obliged to you for those papers you sent us. There are some very useful and interesting pieces in them, of which I think "*I have* and *O had I*" is as good in those respects as any. I have not received a letter from either you or Father, for a considerable time, but if your more important business hinders you, I do not want you to write me, only just to say, that you are well.

It is very good sliding now in some places and we boys enjoy ourselves very much with our sleds. I make very good progress in Latin and Arithmetic which are my chief studies. . . .

I shall hope to see you the first of May with Father and Sister. O how I wish it was to day. We have had pleasant weather for a great many days past, I have not been to the Office, but studied at home, because Uncle was detained by other business. I have got through the Catechism, and am now going over again, all the other boys are most through.

I forgot to tell you in my last letter what the name of my Sunday School teacher was, it is Miss Sarah Backus whom you probably know.

We are all well, please write soon if you have time. How are you all, please tell me in your next when you are coming to see us.

Ever believe me your
affectionate son
E. C. S.

Norwich October 7th 1844

My Dear Mother,

I received your welcome letter for September safe. I was very sorry indeed to learn, that my dear little sister had been sick, and, when you wrote your letter, had not entirely recovered, if she is not well now I hope she will be by the time you answer me, so that you can have the satisfaction of writing, and I of reading, that she is well. I think that whoever directed the Numbers of Merry's Museum that you sent with your letter to Charlie and me, must have made a mistake, for they were directed to James C Stedman, the name of Cousin Charle's little boy. Miss Susanna Lee was married a few weeks ago to Mr Royal Jennings. You saw Miss Lee while you was here. I believe he is a very fine young man, he used to keep store with Cousin Thomas. My lessons in school are about the same, only I have taken up Pinnocks Goldsmiths History of Europe, and Town's Spelling book. I like my new History very much. Mr Aikman does not intend to keep another term. We boys enjoy ourselves very much riding on our Velociped, I can make it go very fast alone, I ran a race with Mr Bennet, the man that we rode down to the landing with, who went so slow, and beat him by half way. It is now about time to go a Ches-nuting and I wish I was at Cedar Brook to get some off of Grand-father's big tree in the Lawn. We have been having our Equinoctial storm for about a week, and cold weather has begun to come. I use that eye-salve you gave me every night, and my eyes are a great deal better for it; it is now almost all gone.

I have got some of the boys to have a training, I have twenty two in my company. I am Captain on horse back and I ride on the one you gave me.—We are all well and send much love, give a kiss to each of My dear little sisters for Charlie and me, and

Ever believe me
your affectionate son,
Edmund C. Stedman

8th P. S. We had a meeting yesterday to choose town officers and the ticket went clean whig, there was not a locofoco officer chosen. Hurrah for Clay and victory. It is my birthday to day and I am eleven years old. I have now been four and ¼ years at Norwich, how fast time flies.

Norwich, Sept. 9th, 1845

. . . The Academy has not been opened yet. Mr. Morris is not going to keep any more, and we do not know who we shall have next for a master. I began to study Greek by myself the day after you went. . . .

Norwich Dec. 27th 1847.

My Dear Mother—

Although it is not very long since I have written you, I have so many things to tell you—questions to ask you—and concerns to talk about, that I hardly know where to begin. But it is necessary to tell something first, and as I do not know as it differs which I tell—I will write what comes into my mind first. I do not remember whether I told you in my last that we had received the portrait of father. At any rate, it is such good news that it will do no hurt to tell it twice. It came either just before or just after—my last letter, I forget which. If it was before you will find the account in my last letter. It now hangs conspicuous in our parlor. The frame is somewhate tarnished by age, and in some places the plaster is cracked or knocked off, but I suppose it can be easily replaced. You remember Turville Adams, you know he was taken with raising blood last winter and has been for the last year in a galloping consumption. He is dead. He died about a week ago, on Wednesday, at half past two in the afternoon. For the last three or four months of his life he was very serious and attentive to religion and before he died he gave satisfactory evidence that he was prepared for his great and last change. We all loved him like a brother, and we all strove to act the part of brothers to him. You know that persons in a consumption require a great deal of attention and care, and in many circumstances none were so suitable to attend upon him and administer to his wants as boys. Every night for the last six months one of us has had to go up with him to bed, undress him, and help him to bed. Sometimes he would sit for as much as an hour without undressing it was so tiresome to him. He gradually wasted away, and at his death there was not a pound of flesh on him, nothing but skin and bone. You can judge how poor he was when I tell you that his legs above his knees were no larger around than my arms, and his arms wasted in proportion. Every one that saw him said that he looked like a skeleton. When he died, his head was in Annie's lap. About five minutes before he died his eyesight failed him and he said it was dark. He died so calmny that not a motion or a struggle was perceived. Hunt, his elder brother, is going to New York on the first of January to live. His father has married again and his new mother is a nice woman. We shall not be very lonely after all, for on Monday another boy came to board here. He is about ten years old and he is quite a smart little fellow. He has a tied tongue which his parents neglected to cut till he was too old, so that he cannot speak plain. Saturday will be New years day. How quick the year rolls around. Just a year ago poor Turville caught his death cold. This is the seventh New Years day that I have spent in Norwich, and yet I remember all that happened and how every thing looked at Grandfather's. Somehow or other, I can't tell why, although I have spent the better portion of life here, it does not seem like home to me. I cannot explain this feeling, unless it is that I love you so much that nowhere seems home unless you are with me. Whenever we speak of going to see you we always say "going home," although in reality we are going away from home.

I am prepared for *Yale* College. I cannot go to Princeton without studying two years more. I am sorry but cannot help it. I hope Uncle will let me go this next fall, but I don't believe he will. He says I am too small. Can't you give me a receipt for growing? I want to request of you—my dear Mother, not to visit us next summer. You think this is a strange request but I will tell you why. I had much rather visit you and see Clementine and Mary, than only see you and not see them once in three years. That would be *too hard*. This term is to last sixteen and a half months and we are to have an examination at the end, which is to last perhaps a week.

I want very much to receive a good long letter [from] you if you can get time to write one. Why cant Clementine [write] one. I wish she would. One of these days I mean to write her and Mary both. I was happy to receive "The Indian Summer" and the "Ode for Thanksgiving." I saw the former copied in the N. Y. Observer. It is a beautiful piece and (in my estimation) worthy of its author. Does your health continue to improve? I am in fear lest you will again relapse, and be as sick as you were before. Is father well and do our sisters get along pretty fast in school? Please to give much love to all of them and do not forget—your affectionate son

E. C. Stedman.

P. S. I have had to write this in school and have been troubled and hurried all the time, so please excuse my very bad writing and worse mistakes.

My very dear Mother—

I would have written you before, but I was waiting to learn the result of the examination of your lungs. I am very glad to hear that circumstances have turned out so much better than I was afraid they would, but Aunt Stedman tells me that a bronchitis is very dangerous and is sometimes accompanied by death. God grant that it may not be so in your case. Why can you not do as the doctor says and take a sea voyage. I wish you would if it will do you any good, although it would keep me from seeing you for a great while unless I could accompany you. I shall hope for the best.

I wish my dear mother that you could arange with Uncle Stedman so that I could see you oftener and for a longer time. You say that it makes you feel better to travel a little. I should like it very much if in one of your jaunts you should come here and see us a little while. You seem to be surprised that I am studying Greek and Charlie Latin. I am more than half fitted in my Greek and Charlie is translating Latin. You ask to see some of our compositions, I have written three or four pieces which as soon as I can get them ready I will send to you. I have written one to my sister who died before I was born which I wish you would correct if necessary, and one the name of which is, A marriage at sea; it is quite long for me. I have written two others, the best of which is entitled, Home, and you may name the other any name that you like. I will send one in this letter. I have received four pamphlets for which we thank you very much. I do not think the new style of Merry's Museum is got up so well as before. I wish I could go to Princeton College, it is so near you, but I think that Uncle would not consent to any such thing. Uncle and the family desire to be remembered to you. Charlie and I send much love to you and Father and many kisses to our dear little sisters. Sunday is Valentine day I suppose you know, I have written a few and expect none. I enclose a little piece of my poetry.

Ever believe me
your affectionate son
E. C. Stedman.

Home.

I have climbed to the top of a mountain high,
And have bathed me in its breeze;
I have wandered o'er sunny Italy,
And the classic isles of Greece.
I have been in lands of eternal Spring,
And oft hath it pleased me to roam,
Where the weak grow strong, and the aged young,
But still there is no place like home.

I have seen the maidens of the South,
With their raven eyes and hair;
I have lived in the regions of ice and snow,
And have gazed on beauty there;
I have seen the Harems motley crowd,
With their grace of gait and of form;
But throughout the world no faces are fair,
Or lovely, as those of home.

I have travelled the Earth from pole to pole,
I have sailed o'er the Oceans foam;
But yet no place hath charms for me,
So strong, as my own, loved, home.
And when I have run my earthly race,
And my final hour has come,
Oh! may I die in that blessed place,
My early and cherished home.

There's a home beyond the broad, blue, sky,
Where the weary may find rest;
Where their troubles cease, and all is peace,
Of every home the best.

As I linger out this wavering life,
When ever afflictions come,
I in silence strive, and patiently live,
And think of my wished for home.

FINIS.

E. C. Stedman

Norwich—Thursday—March 16th 1848.

Dear Mother—

As our examination takes place within a week, I have been so very busy for a month past in preparing for it, that I have been obliged to occupy all my leisure time in school, in reviewing and writing over the compositions which are to be exhibited, or else I would have written you long before this. Reviewing all my compositions for the last six months (I write one every two weeks) is no small task. All of them together contain fifty pages of letter-press, and then besides, I have to copy them all into a book. I will send them to you when they have passed through the furnace. . . .

As our examination ends a week from Saturday, and our vacation begins on the Monday after, I suppose it is time to make some decision as to our annual visit in the vacation, and if it is decided that it shall be then, to make some arrangements with regard to it. This examination term has lasted for six months, that is, two terms have been joined together, and we have had no vacation during that time. So I suppose we shall have a vacation of two or three weeks, if not more. But there is a report all around that Mr Pettis is going away and if so we shall have no school until a new schoolmaster is obtained. But Mr Pettis is one of those sort that love to live in mystery, and we shall get nothing out of him till the last day of the term. But we shall have certainly two weeks, probably three, and perhaps more. As to whether the Spring will be far enough advanced by the beginning of April, you of course will judge. I should be very glad to receive a letter from you.

You know, I suppose, that old Mrs Joseph Huntingdon is dead. She did not wait long after the death of her son in law and has met him, I trust, in Heaven. Uncle Joseph was on here at her funeral. I was very glad to see him for he told me about you. Our examination will begin Wednesday and last three days.

Mr Pettis gives *nine* prizes out of five dollars! There are three for scholarship, one for the best of one dollar, sixty cents for the second and forty for the third. There are two for the best speakers, of sixty and forty cents. Two for composition of the boys, of sixty and forty cents and two more of the same amount for the girls composition. We have to hand in all our compositions, that it will be a great bore to those who judge their merit, to read some three hundred.

I wish to see Clemmy and Mary very much. It is rather hard for a person not to see his own sisters but once in two or three years. But if I can see them this summer or spring I will not complain. I want to bring the dear little things some presents, but I don't know what they will like. If you will tell me something that you think they will like I will try to get it. The only things that I can give you are a sons love and a warm heart.

Please give much love to father and our sisters. Take much to yourself and please to write me soon if you find it convenient.

Ever believe me
your affectionate son
E. C. STEDMAN.

P. S. We have to sign a fictitious name to our compositions, Mine is "Clarence." You must excuse me for speaking so much of school and examination, for I am thinking of it all the time.

NORWICH, Thursday, April 26th 1848.

DEAREST MOTHER—

. . . We arrived here safe and sound on Saturday morning, and on Monday began to go to school. Mr. Pettis has but seventeen scholars! He had forty, term before last. I am one of the largest boys; most all the scholars are what we call "small fry." On some accounts I am pleased with the smallness of the school, on others not. He will have more time to devote to me, than he had last term, but then (as is usual when he has but few scholars) he is as cross as two sticks. In accordance with your wishes, I have begun the Greek Testament and have got nearly an eighth through it, trusting that I shall get into Nassau Hall in the Fall. When you feel well enough please to write me, & as things have about assumed their old "routine" with me, the weather is pretty calm, & Uncle pretty clever, it is a pretty good time to drop a line about my college affairs. Uncle White has written to Uncle Stedman about sending Erskine and Charlie here & Uncle has written an answer this (Thursday) afternoon. What he has answered is more than I know. I wish they would come, I want better company than that low Spaniard.

It was the greatest trial of my life to part from you. I have felt sad & melancholy ever since & I am only reconciled to it by the thought that I shall see you again before long & that as soon as it is warm enough you are going into the country. I wish you could come here. But I must close for I am going to insert a little piece in praise of our schoolroom stove. I will send you the piece you asked me as quick as I can look it over. I wrote my "Stove Song" this morning in school.

Remember me & ever believe me
Your affectionate son—
E. C. Stedman.

Our Old, Cracked Stove.

A song of the stove—the old, cracked, stove!
Which sitteth and blazeth away,
In the middle aisle of the old schoolroom,
From morn till the close of the day.
The old, cracked, stove with its old, black, pipe,
Hath stood for this many a year,
In the self-same place, in the middle aisle,
And hath roared with a right good cheer.

The old, cracked, stove hath a gray, cold look,
And a fissure wide in the back,
But never a whit, is it worse for it,
For the warmth comes out at the crack.
Our old, cracked, stove's like a Yankee tough,
Whose manners are rough and rude;
But beneath his rugged and brawny breast,
Beats a heart thats warm and good.

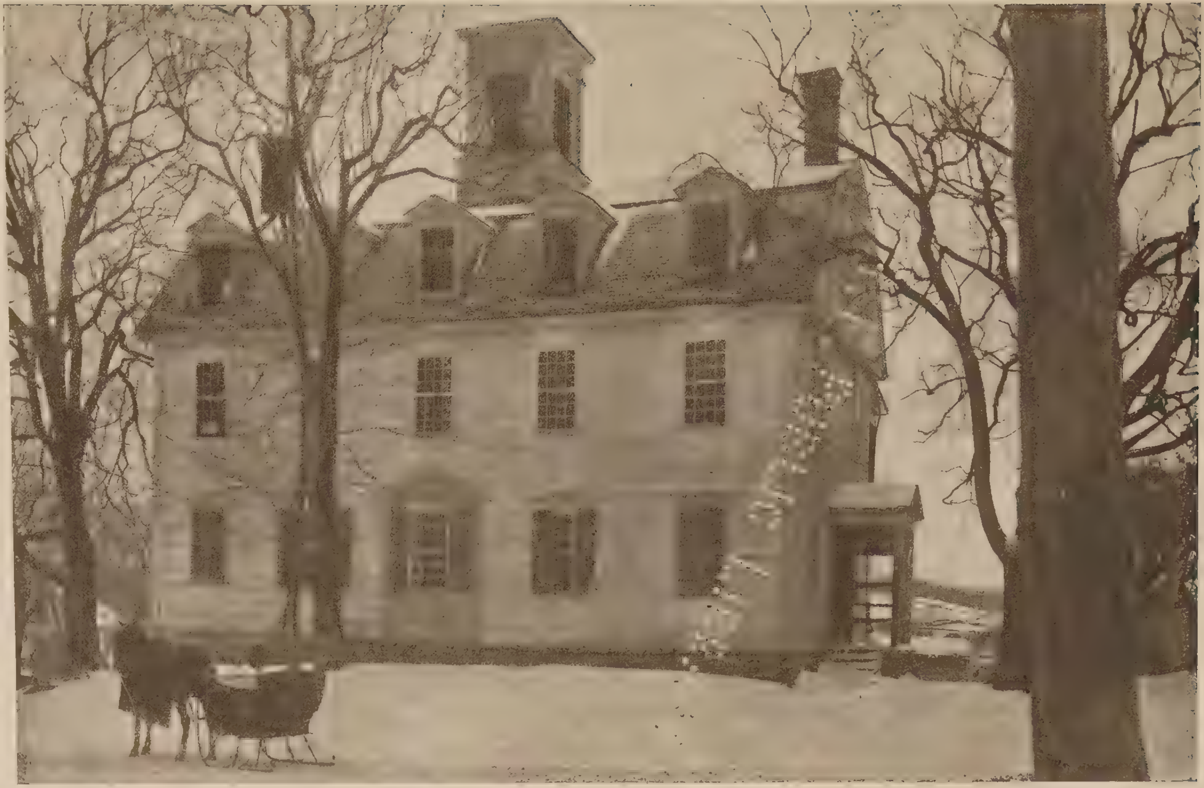
'Tis a pleasant thing on a winters morn,
When our fingers and ears are cold;
To gather around our old, cracked, stove,
And to warm ourselves make bold.

For a warming thing is our old, cracked, stove,
  And a roaring sound hath he;
And the cinders crack in his old, black, pipe,
  When he blazeth merrily.

Then—Huzza! for the stove—the old, cracked, stove,
  Which sitteth and blazeth away,
In the middle aisle of the old, schoolroom,
  From morn till the close of the day.
May the old, cracked, stove, with its old, black, pipe,
  Still stand for this many a year,
In the middle aisle of the old schoolroom,
  And roar with as warm a cheer.

E. C. S.

"Ned Stedman" was now an Academy student; first he had attended day school, a dame's school, kept by Mrs. Lathrop, going to Miss Sally Goodell's dame school, on his Saturday half holidays, to learn sewing. He next went to the Old Brick Schoolhouse, of Revolutionary date, on the Village Green, and when the warm days came again he was sent to Mr. Robert Aikman's summer school—a little brick house just north of the home of Ned's chums, Tom and Ned Harland. But the boy was inattentive and languid, and after a general mutiny in school, he was set free till Autumn, when he entered the Old Academy, studying there under Dr. Gulliver and its principal Mr. Pettis. He now began to be ambitious; the rivalry with the older boys interested him. Perhaps he could make something of himself—"My greatest desire is to be renowned." This desire burned, and he confided it to his mother, who was alarmed lest her son was becoming selfish and egotistical. Her alarm dashed his enthusiasm, for his sensitive spirit was easily swayed by any rebuff, and the chill atmosphere of his Uncle's home made him feel of little consequence. For a season he was depressed and melancholy, and then urged himself to his studies with a partial contentment. "I always have remembered," he once wrote to a charming



THE OLD ACADEMY AT NORWICH TOWN, WHERE STEDMAN WENT TO SCHOOL

cousin, "that you were one of the fair 'Muses' whom I ought to invoke as the true encourager of my otherwise rather cheerless and unaided boyhood. That you seemed to comprehend me then, and at least seemed to have hopes of me was an amazing stimulus—far more than you could have believed, and it was applied at just the right time to keep me from becoming that most intolerable of failures, a youthful pessimist."

His was a frail and highly sensitive organization, and he was not a healthy boy during these Norwich years, suffering from his eyes, and often from pains in his chest. But he was the leading spirit of fun with his mates, boys usually older than himself, and, when Ned got the bit in his teeth, Mr. Pettis, a man without force, had no power of control. One morning the boys became so ungovernable that Mr. Pettis roared that they must stay in their seats until they should behave themselves. The afternoon drew to night, and still the racket continued. Finally large tallow candles had to be brought out: the scene delighted Ned who forthwith wrote a parody on *Hohenlinden*, then chanted it forth to his laughing mates. The first and last stanzas are remembered by Mr. Asher H. Wilcox, one of the boys:

On Norwich when the sun was low
  All bloodless lay the untrodden snow
And dark as winter was the flow
  Of Yantic rolling rapidly.

. . . .

By tallow candles there arrayed
  Each rogue drew out his jack-knife blade
And every young one racket made
  With culpable impiety.

Mr. Pettis had to submit to the humility of being utterly defeated.

Over Fuller's store, on the Green, just below and across the road from the Old Academy, was Tufts, the cobbler. Tufts was a boon companion of Ned Stedman, and the old man would listen for hours, while the lad told him stories, discussed politics, or some leading question. And here it was that Ned used to foregather with his older mates, reading to them from some wild and romantic yellow-covered novel. Sometimes a band of them would sally forth to the battered cottage on the road to Bean Hill, where old Hannah and Lizzy Arnold, the poverty-stricken cousins of Benedict Arnold, lived. "Heaven forgive me and the larger boys who knew no better than to fling turf and other missiles against their doors—and believe they were witches."

During an occasional visit to his mother, Edmund talked with Mr. Kinney; this quickened the boy's intellect, and inspired him with something akin to awe. Writing in 1890, to the Honorable Courtlandt Palmer, on the opening of the Newark Free Library, Mr. Stedman says: "I am touched and gratified by the graceful allusions, in your most apt and reminiscent oration, to my mother and step-father, and by your remembrance of myself. It is of peculiar interest and value to me that you so fitly closed your Address with the Ode written by my dear and gifted mother for the opening of the original Library. *Can* it be that forty years have passed since then! I was a lad of fourteen when that ode was written, and was in Newark on one of my rare visits from New England to the old Park House. What a group gathered *there*, in those charmed days, and how I drank in every word that fell from the lips of Mr. Kinney and my mother, of Dr. Coles, of W. W. Lord—the poet from whom you quote the noble phrase, 'Bowed like an antique god.' That line, I remember, is from a sonnet addressed to 'W. B. K.,' but I think those special words referred to Dr. Dodd, or Dr. Alexander, of Princeton? That first book of Lord's—which Edgar Poe attacked savagely—proved him to be a true poet and man of genius. But he scarcely achieved the career expected of him."

Probably, the strife was always rampant between the guardian and the mettlesome "Ned." Probably, the guardian suffered very much, and without disloyalty we may pity him. But, certainly, the boy became more and more melancholy. "I am sorry that you are beginning to indulge a misanthropic and discontented state of mind," sighs his mother. Yes, he chafed at his confines, longed for poetry and beauty and freedom, above all for affection and approval —for he wanted to do what was right,—and he found a pathetic consolation in asserting his fearless independence in daring pranks; while his hunger for gentle love and sympathy sent him to dream away long hours, lying on the stone footbridge in the old Burying Ground; or, perhaps, he would forget it all, as he hid himself in the deep grass, and "read Keats in enchantment." The fragrance of rare old Norwich Town instilled itself into his very being

—of all cities in the Eastern valley
Ours is the fairest one.

"I am always a Norwich boy," he would say. He never failed of an opportunity to pay a graceful tribute to an old-time friend, nor to have the right flint bring forth a Norwich spark: many years later, answering an official invitation, he slips in this informal word:

> I must beg you to tell Mrs. William K. Potter how greatly pleased I am to receive her message—to know that she is among the few left of those whom I so well remember as living in Norwich *Town* when I was a careless, but observing, youngster there.
>
> Did she tell you, I wonder, that my only brother (whom I still mourn) sailed with Captain Potter, and stuck to him and the good ship *Mt. Wollaston* for nearly four years? I still have his log of the whole voyage.
>
> I remember when Captain Potter, his wife, and her sister, lived just above the First Congregational Church, on the Bean Hill road. And the Captain's bride seemed to my boyish eyes so pretty and clever that I wondered how he could tear himself away upon an old-time whaling venture!
>
> But I did not suppose that she would remember me at all. If I live to visit Norwich again, I shall claim the privilege of calling upon her.

In the summer of 1906, he wrote to his kinsman, Dr. Clement Cleveland: "I am delighted with your remembrance and your kindness in sending me these old letters from my Mother to your honored Father. It takes me back to the very time when we were boys in old Norwich, and I can see you now, so much younger than myself, in the brown linen blouse which vastly impressed me. I can remember the Thanksgiving Day,—the first I think after your Father's removal to Norwich,—when my brother and myself shared your Unitarian feast instead of the Congregational Banquet at Deacon Stedman's.

"Knowing perfectly well the stage of my beautiful Mother's development at the date of this correspondence, it is of great interest to me. She had the warmest respect and friendship for your Father."

The following is from one of the last letters that Mr. Stedman ever wrote. It is dated December 21, 1907, and is to Mr. William C. Gilman: "How fine to have those letters by my dear old Sunday-School teacher, Mr. D. W. Coit! I say 'old,' but of course *I* must be a score of years the senior of that affectionate, delightful, travelled Mentor, at the age when he made even Puritanism attractive to me. I prized, too, the visits to his house on the hill, where he showed me drawings, my first glimpses of art, and told me wondrous tales of moneys gained in South America, and necessarily brought away by stratagem. I must have been about twelve or thirteen, say in 1845–6, and I clearly remember that he went to Mexico afterwards, to recruit his fortunes, and that he *of course* came back in time with another sackful of melted silver. This story would make a winsome book for young or old."

How many of the haunts were to be treasured in a later poem; or a character, which caught his photographic memory, revivified! In the summer of 1901, he had a happy holiday in Norwich Town, and there was not one old spot but received an enthusiastic and reverential visit. Upon his return, the extract which follows was written to Miss

Reta Huntington (the ballad which he mentions is "Cousin Lucrece"):

You may be thinking that Laura, Jr., and her forbear have been laggards in not thanking you and your sister for such an evening of Norwich Town as I, for one, have not had for half a lifetime, and can hardly hope to have again. (But I have had it, and she has seen a bit of my youth, and I am content.) Such a tea, such a house, such a summer twilight, and three at least still there, and welcoming me, of the many remembered in those thoughts of youth which are "long, long thoughts"—so Longfellow declared. In truth, it is quite unlikely that you could understand how much it all meant to me—but you will let me say that you and Miss Sarah, and your dear old home, will always have a place in our picture-gallery, and one of warmth and honor in our hearts.

This I would have said before now, but I had some trouble in finding the enclosed pieces (from an old *St. Nicholas*) which I wished to send you. Now that I look again at Albert Sterner's drawing I see that he hit it off much better with the central figure than with the others. In *our* childhood, I am sure that boys and girls did *not* wear the English "early-Georgian" clothes which make these figures so charming, nor do I remember seeing my grown-up cousins in such dresses as that worn by the lady on the right. All the same, "Cousin L." did come into our "keeping-room," Thanksgiving Days, bent over, and rigged as in this picture, and making just such a commotion. Of course my ballad is all "off" as to certain details, but you girls must not take me to task for it—as my memory of the old dame merely served me as a "sketch" from which to make a painting of my own. We *always* called her "Cousin Luc*reshe*" or Lucretia, but "Lucrece" was in better tone for my purpose. Our "house" was not a very "great" one, but we did send our carriage for her yearly. Finally, she didn't die as the poem avows—it would have been quite picturesque if she had—in fact, she ought to have died that way. . . .

I hope you'll be so kind as to accept the copy of my favorite among last year's books—Kenneth Grahames' *The Golden Age* of which I spoke to you. This large-paper edition so delighted me that I used it for many Christmas gifts. The boys were pretty much like us at the Deacon's, only we had no sisters to soften our wildihood—poor little devils that we were, and I the worst of them because the most imaginative.

Two letters which Mr. Stedman wrote, when he himself was a father,—one on style, in 1889, to the Reverend George Bainton, and one to Miss Mary E. Burt, in 1887, on the choice of books for children—seem appropriate to quote here as an evidence of the beneficent advantages of that early training.

As to one's style and the training for it—I am the more impressed, the longer I live, with the force of Buffon's saying. Yes, the Style *is* indeed the Man. When a young fellow consults me as to his mode of making a speech or writing an article, I tell him the first thing is to have *something to say:* i. e., something he *must* say, or express, and then he will say it in *his* natural and special way—and that way forms his style, and the style is thus the man. Style is, like the style of other arts than literature, a means of *expression* only. Still, fluency of expression, or its compactness, or happy originality,—all these are gifts, and often inherited. For my humble self, I inherited from my lady mother (a *natural* poet and critic) a knack of writing and speaking what I think, and *as* I think it. In youth, I was reared in a Puritan New England family—with surroundings that seemed cold, barren, austere, to a boy whose strongest passion was a love for *beauty*—but our New England households are *not* barren of books and mental pabulum. I read eagerly what few of our young people now read —the *great* books—rarely getting hold of trash or *imitative* recent "literature." Sunday was my reading-day *par excellence*, and as I was permitted to read nothing more "secular" than Bunyan and Milton, I read those noble writers over and over again, and suppose that my style was insensibly affected by their methods and vocabularies. My first *own* book of poetry was "Scott's Poetical Works,"[1] which I delighted in—the folk-lore "Notes"

[1] "Scott's poetry," Stedman once wrote to his friend Horace E. Scudder, "in the old Philadelphia calf-bound volume—perhaps copied from the Galiquam series of sixty-five years ago—was the first verse I read in childhood. What better fodder for a boy of 6–10? I have the book still, spotted with oil, for it afterwards went around the world with my brother in a three years' whaler, the *Mount Wollaston*, Captain Potter, from New Bedford. How I believed, with a fearful joy, all those legendary notes! How they came back to me when I stood by the tomb of Walter Scott in that corner of Melrose Abbey."

and all. Afterwards I became familiar with Byron, Moore, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth; and of course with our own Bryant, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Poe, etc. But my prose style owes most to familiarity *with the Bible*, Bunyan, Milton, De Foe, in early youth. Forgive this self-conscious reply which you have drawn from me.

My own training as to *reading* was—none at all. I devoured *everything* printed. If I remember rightly I liked, as a child, *best*, just the same books I like now—though doubtless for different reasons. My own supposition has been that the great books of the world—of course I don't mean Aristotle or Hegel, but Homer, Shakespeare, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Scott, all great poems—tales, wonder-books, travels, etc.—are as fascinating and instructive to children as to men. I have had a vague idea, which I once put into my chapter on Mrs. Browning, that a bright child, given the "run" of books good and bad, will take in just about the mental and moral food it *needs*—and little else; just as a grape-vine will draw from any soil what *it* needs, and not what poison-ivy would draw therefrom. Yet I remember that certain books made me too romantic and visionary for my own wordly good, and so I can realize that it must be well for a youth to have some guidance, and *wise* guidance, and aid in the choice of reading. Of late years I have been so busy with my own work, and with various burdens, that I know but very few of the modern books for children. My own boys simply, like me, had the run of the library, and the one that read the most of *everything* has proved the better boy of the two.

Perhaps the iron of those early days, which seared his heart, made it difficult for him even afterwards to perceive the good which must come. Surely he could not then know that the tests of endurance were to arm him for other battles as severe. In his manhood, he did realize that he must thank his uncle for keeping the child's mind close to the classics. "The Latin Grammar I knew by heart, the English Grammar by inference," Stedman used whimsically to say. A. R. Macdonough, one of his earliest critics, in an article in *Scribner's*, 1873, remarks: "Stedman's English proves by the purity of its selection, and the neatness and conciseness of its turn, that if the literature of his mother tongue made any part of his training, . . . he was guided to the fountain, and not to the manufacturer's rills. And everywhere throughout his verse we catch the traces of early familiarity with nature."

Can this chapter of old Norwich close more fittingly than with the letter which Mr. Stedman wrote to its Rural Association[1] on April 19, 1890?

> Let me confess that I sat down to write to you, just now,—as I have written to several other Arbor Day Committees,—that I am so embarrassed this month with overwork that I must ask you to wait another year for the few words so kindly desired.
>
> But your letter, a graceful petal from "The Rose of New England," calls up memories. On second thought I cannot put off in that way the first request sent me from Old Norwich Town.
>
> To the "Landing" one might give the go-by, but not to the "Old Town" as I knew it; or, rather, as I know it now, and could not have known it until after some knowledge of the outer and less characteristic world.
>
> For, I now comprehend that even a Hawthorne might have found in old Norwich food for his imagination, and need not have gone abroad for themes and types. Where was there, indeed, a place to rival it, with its rocks and trees and ancient manor houses and fragrant gardens; its dear old ladies shutting up the front windows of their mossy houses, but airing, in their ancient carriage, their more ancient manners and their fine old lace; its curfew rung at 9 P. M.; its burying ground, dating from the time of William and Mary; its conference-meeting courtships; its elm-bordered green, where grass needed no cutting, for the cows clipped the lower end, and we Academy boys gave it small chance to grow between the Church and "Fuller's Store"; its base-ball and turkey-matches on Fast Days; its bon-fires on Thanksgiving; its baked beans and sewing circles and revivals and town meetings;

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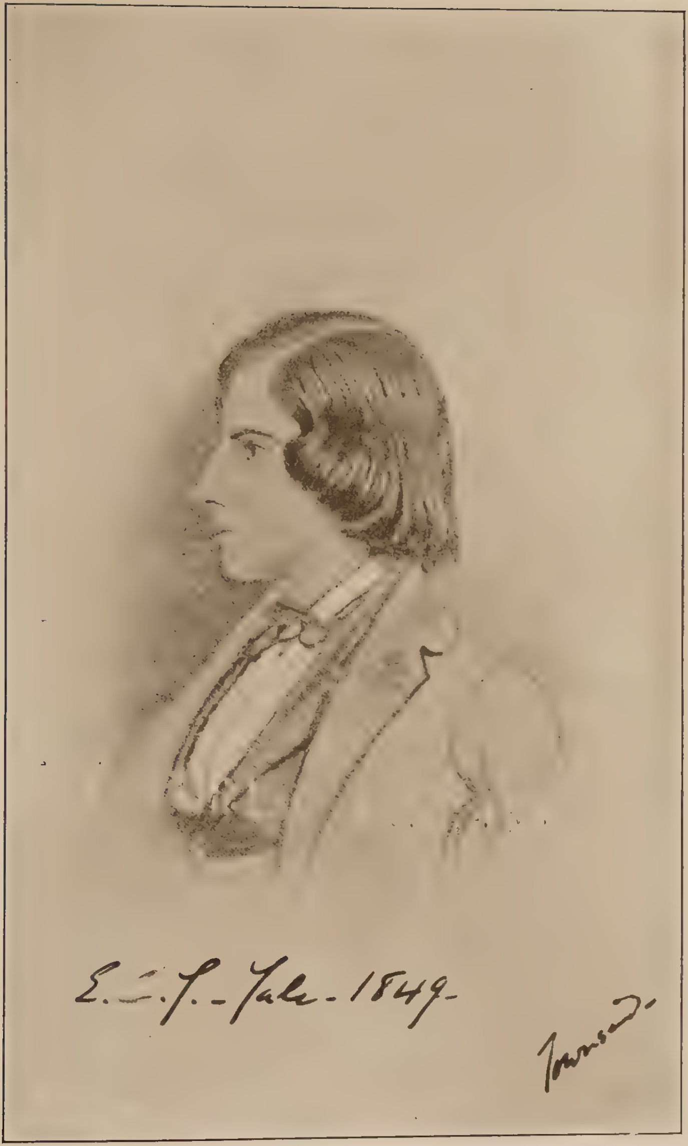
[1] In 1906, with "The Inland City," printed by the Academy Press. "That booklet," says Mr. Stedman, "was an idea of Miss Gilman's, bless her refined soul, and gave me more simple pleasure than any one of my big bow-wow volumes. The 'Letter' was sent off-hand to the 'Rural Association.' As for the poem, which pleased you, it was a boyish thing written in my faraway teens, when all young would-be's imitated Longfellow—then the risen Kappelmeister."



STEDMAN AT YALE COLLEGE, 1849
From a drawing by Townsend

its Deacons and Tithing-men and Select-men and Justices of the Peace; its pretty girls each one fit to be the wife of a President, far too sweet and good to be sold to any English Duke!

Old Norwich! where no one ever got very rich, not even Mr. Fuller; where our tailor was a statesman and our shoemaker a philosopher; where, in fact, there was no dull side to the picture, except the long sermons, and a general conviction on the part of the grown-up residents that a funeral was the nicest, as it was the most frequent, kind of entertainment, and that it was ever so much better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting,—Thanksgiving Day excepted. Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford" was not a "circumstance" to that picturesque town, where I played and studied and dreamed, but most of all ran wild amid its woods and waters, during the ten years of adolescence, which are the longest season of everyone's life.

Two summers ago I passed a week with our young romancer "Sidney Luska," visiting the old town after a quarter of a century's absence. I saw the good work of the Rural Association. So many more trees, so much more trim and trig, yet picturesque. The whole circuit "round town" through a continuous grove. One had to climb above it to take it all in.

No one can be born amid such beauty without forming unconsciously a taste for the beautiful; it is the only place that I know of where one could endure the Westminster confession without revision.

But I had two griefs during my visit. The first, all will comprehend who are familiar with the annals of the Stedman homestead and with those of Yantic cemetery; the other, was the loss of my boyhood's companion, that I had verily thought immortal —I mean the brook which came down by the Scotland road and the present Gulliver place, through the meadow and the hollow in front of Deacon Stedman's house and so on to the Yantic river. I do not know what it was called. I never asked its name; it used to flow right along without calling summer and winter, and to put on great airs in the spring freshet time. It was to me one of the most live and beautiful things on earth. I used so often to seek its company and follow it up into the woods, and so much of it ran through my uncle's land to the northeast, that I grew to consider it my own brook. There were trout left in it, and often after a rain did I catch a half dozen. I have caught larger ones since, but none worth so much to me. I know every turn and hole and riffle in that brook. Nobody ventured to utilize it for anything.

What haunted me in those days as I went mooning along it—what I sought to find—I do not know; but on the first day of my recent visit I went to its banks; I knew what I was looking for; it was nothing less than that which Longfellow has entitled "My Lost Youth." Well, the brook was as much gone as my youth, just about as much; there was, to be sure, a tiny trickle glimmering between its narrow banks—the stream too tiny and the banks too narrow to be accounted for by the lens of age substituted for the magnifying eye of boyhood. Plainly there had been a conspiracy somewhere. The next morning I followed the trail through the meadows and up through the woods, until at last, away at the farthest boundary of my early rambles, I came upon a huge stone dam, imprisoning a sparkling mimic lake, and the mystery was solved. Dr. Hale has told of "the man who stole a meeting house." No man would have dared steal my brook. It took a corporation. Yes, there were the names engraved upon the brook's prison walls. They actually gloried in their crime! Of course it was done by the "down towners"—and under the transparent pretext of needing water! In my day that was not a fashionable beverage at the "landing." The cause of temperance doubtless has advanced; I confess there was room for it; but the old town has lost one of its prettiest features.

However, the Rural Association has added beauties that make amends for all that I have missed, and I will no longer "Look before and after, and sigh for what is not."

CHAPTER III

COLLEGE DAYS

1849–1851

In August 1849, the schoolboy, fifteen years old, next to the youngest of a large class, entered Yale College. He had studied diligently, hoping at first, as his letters have shown, that he might go to Princeton, where he would be near his mother. Now, on entering Yale, a college, which for academic reasons attracted him, he was inspired with the opportunity to prove his ability, thereby gratifying the mother, who had said to him "My son, be a poet." Also, he believed that once through college, he would be free to join her. He passed successfully the customary examinations, and excelled in Latin, Greek, and Composition, subjects in which many candidates were deficient.

"In him then," one of his friends says, "were manifested the same characteristics of nervous energy, vivid imagination, conscientious, painstaking work, keen literary instincts, tenacious purpose, and glowing affection, which throughout his life made him so widely admired and loved." His appearance is described as that of "a small, slender young fellow, with black hair, worn rather long, and cut squarely around, just above his turndown collar. He had, usually, a very bright color, though his face which was somewhat thin, would at times be quite pale, the color, whether from temporary illness or other cause, fading out entirely." "He was smooth-faced, with very sparkling violet eyes."

"You are mistaken," Stedman wrote on his sixtieth birthday to an old sophomore friend, John C. Dubois, "in saying that I was always young. I was too old, for my age, when you and I lived under Dame Green's roof, and where my watch was 'faked' by her dissolute son. (My guardian always believed that I pawned it, and as it was my sole relic of my dead father, his suspicion almost broke my heart.) Only last summer, at our 40th Class gathering, I went around to No. 1 College Street, and it seemed to me that the old corner house looked just the same as ever, and uncommonly theological and Philistine."

In the following letters to his guardian, James Stedman, he gives a glimpse of these opening days:

New Haven, Oct. 16th '49

Dear Uncle—I received your letter of the 4th inst, on Saturday the 6th, in the *afternoon*, but not through the medium of Cousin Charles as was expected. It seems by a note that he wrote on the outside of it, that he was delayed over night in Hartford, and came down in the 12 o'clock train Saturday morning. As I did not receive the letter till afternoon, I very unfortunately missed seeing him and family at the Depot. I am very sorry, for after being here two or three weeks (it seems like a year) a face so familiar is worth more than even the 10 dollar bill contained in your letter. The *money* however, was the thing that I really needed. I am very much amused and at the same time vexed at my adventures since my arrival. I had been here but three days, when my worthy landlady was taken ill (in consequence of a dispute with her son) and some fifteen of us were turned adrift to live or starve as we could. After a great deal of trouble and two meals at a Restaurant, I found board at a Mrs. Burritt's, at the same price [as] with Mrs. Green ($2.50) and *ten times* better. There I continued two weeks and am now back at Mrs. Green's. I have paid five dollars for my board and four dollars and a half for wood. They charge *nine dollars a cord for wood*, "*sawed split and delivered*" at the Treasurer's office! It is outrageous.

I am getting along very well in my studies and like my tutor and College in general exceedingly. I make my *debut* at the Linonian Hall, Wednesday night. I have been elected to the secret society of the Delta Kappa which I consider an honor.

It seems as if I had been from home a *great* while, and I want to see you here very soon. I am expecting every day to meet you, sir, at the cars. It metamorphoses one into a man to be left by himself in this way—to fish on his own hook as they say.

Please pardon my hasty and unconnected letter. I am about to go to recitation and must stop. The other boys are all well and I am also. How are you all. Cousins Thomas and Annie were sick—are they well yet? Please give my love to one and all. Hoping to see you soon I am

Your very affectionate nephew—
Edmund C. Stedman.

P. S. I can do with nine pieces a week in washing, I find, which makes it very cheap.

Dear Uncle—I do not wish to burden you with too many letters, as you may think, it being only a few days since I wrote last. My object in now writing is to say that I spent the ten dollars you sent me almost immediately on its receipt, for my board and wood, and that now I have got to pay Society taxes, Subscription to "Yale Literary" and one or two smaller affairs and have not a cent of money, and to ask if you will be so kind as to forward me some. I hate to ask for money and have delayed, expecting to see you here every day, but have been disappointed. I had about three weeks of home-sickness, blues etc. but am getting better now. It was enough to make any one feel bad to be here alone and receive no letters from any one. I began to believe that Cousins Annie and Mary had misdirected their letters, but it seems they never wrote any.

I am getting on first-rate in my studies and like College right well, now I have got domesticated. I am quite well and hope all at home are the same. Have cousin Thomas and Annie recovered? Hoping to see you very soon in N. H.—

I am your affectionate nephew
Edmund

P. S. Please not to judge of my improvement in writing by this letter for I am in a great hurry.

Yale College, November 14th, 1849

Dear Uncle—I received your letter of the 9th and am very thankful to you for answering mine so soon. I would have written immediately, to inform you of the safe arrival of your's, but, in addition to my usual studies and duties, I have been engaged for the last week in preparing my maiden debate which I offered last night on the floor of Linonia Hall. Owing to this—I have had no time to write until now, and I hope that you will excuse me, Sir, on this account. The money that you sent is amply sufficient for all my necessities.

I am glad to learn that the folks are all well. I felt a good deal of anxiety about Annie and Thomas when I left, for they were both pretty sick. I hope Annie's visit to Stafford has done her *lasting* good. It seems hard that she should be so continually sick during the otherwise best portion of her life. The longer I stay in N. Haven the more I like it. For the first four or five weeks I felt badly and had quite a touch of "home-sickness"—The fact of it is, one never knows how much he likes a place till he gets out of it. But now this is over, I begin to have more confidence in myself and to feel more like a man, having to act for myself as I do here. I drew up a schedule dividing my time and assigning so much to each duty or pastime when I first came here and I find it does me a great deal of good. In the morning I get up at 6½ o'clock and run to prayers and morning recitation —then at 8 o'clock come ("home"?) and find my room cleaned and take my breakfast. Then I take half an hour to do anything I wish to in, which brings me up to 9 o'clock, at which time I take my books and study till 11—the time for recitation. At twelve, when recitation is over I exercise till one in the Gymnasium, then go home to dinner. After dinner I do what I please till two and then begin and study till 4—the time for evening recitation and prayers; then come to supper. At 7 o'clock I begin to study till ten. To bed at 10½ or 11.

You mention, sir, my having joined a secret society and express a hope that it is a moral one and attended with advantages to its members. I am glad to be able to assure you that its object is *entirely literary*. Our members are—many of them— professors of religion and *all* as far as I can see well-behaved and studious fellows. We have reason to suppose that our rival in the Freshman class—the "K. S. E." is not so literary or moral as ours. I was elected to both and could have joined either but I chose D. K. and I am glad of it too. I believe it will be of immense advantage to us all.

I like our tutors very much. Our Greek instructor, or rather, our instructor in Greek is Prof. Hadley—the finest Greek scholar in the U. S.

I will tell you all about them, sir, and about College and its affairs in another letter. Please tell Cousin Mary P. J.—that *her* Cousin Jos. Backus is my division tutor and I like him much. I am getting along well (I think) in my studies and am very much interested in the new truths which are daily laid before us. The Freshman class of this year study more and higher branches than the Sophomore twenty years ago.

Please to give my love to all, sir, and ask them to write me. A letter here is a real "God-send." I thank all and you sir for your kind wishes and they are reciprocated by

Your affectionate nephew
EDMUND

P. S. Ned [Harland] is quite well and is grateful for the interest you take in him.

[Enclosed with this letter was the following:]

RULES.

To be observed by me, and to regulate my conduct, during the whole course of my College life.

1st. I will observe and obey all the regulations and commands of my superiors in College, and the laws of the institution.

Particularly, I will always be present at morning and evening prayers and all other *devotional* exercises.

I will attend all *recitations*, except when *necessarily* compelled to be absent by sickness or some other unavoidable accident.

I will endeavor to spend the hours required by the laws of College for study in my room in that pursuit.

2nd. I will always make it a point to come to every recitation with my lessons perfectly prepared.

3rd. I resolve to abstain *entirely* from *profane swearing*, *gaming*, *drinking* or *disorderly behaviour*.

4th. In my pursuit of knowledge, I will make my *first* object—my Duty. My second—my love of Knowledge. My third my Ambition.

Last: I will read these rules twice in every week, viz—each Wednesday and Saturday.

EDMUND C. STEDMAN

His guardian's letters in reply have not been preserved, but Mr. Stedman has said that he used to open such letters, "wondering whether I should get a V or a well-merited scolding. I believe the dear old gentleman used to send them pretty regularly together. He was too kind to omit the one, and too conscientious to withhold the other."

The young Freshman progressed well. He was fascinated by the intercourse with older comrades; the competition with their active minds was full of zest for him. Every moment that he could snatch, he would slip off to the Old Library, where he found many books of poetry and of the drama. There in his sophomore year, he discovered Poe's works "good and bad, and read them so much that even now, I instantly recognize every sentence of his that ever was reprinted in any of his books." He must have plunged himself also into hard study, for his mother writes: "What you say of yourself saddens, as well as gladdens me, for your mental growth and performances seem to be at the expense of your bodily strength, anxiety for which often fills me with gloom. Do not let your ambition, noble as it is, burn up the beautiful springs of existence: for my sake take care of a constitution hereditarily frail."

This "constitution" suffered from many exposures and hardships. His narrow room was often cold, and he deprived himself of necessary comforts to share his small allowance in "treating" his chums, for while at first unpopular with certain orthodox students, he was a leading favorite with the others.

At the end of his first college year, his enthusiasm was suddenly chilled, and his heart was deeply hurt. Mr. Kinney, his step-father, was appointed Minister to the Court of Victor Emmanuel, and on June 19, 1850, the boy went to his mother to say farewell—a long farewell, for eventually the separation was to last twelve years. It was a tragedy to him. Of the touching scene, Mrs. Kinney writes: "And there was my poet-boy! with his wistful eyes fastened on me so that it seemed as if nothing *could* tear him from the mother he had worshipped afar off for the last sad years. He grew so tenacious in his looks, and in the pressure of the hand which held mine, that I began to fear he would not let go his hold, when the signal should be given for our departure; or that he would conceal himself, after our painful parting, somewhere in the steamer, so as not to leave me. But when all who had accompanied us, or come to see us off, stood on the wharf, waving hats and handkerchiefs as we sailed away from it, on searching through that multitude, I, at length, discovered Edmund holding on to a beam for support, his face pale, and his eyes peering out through their tears to catch the last farewell-glance that mine left behind. Oh, what a moment was that! His earnest, almost despairing look was photographed on my heart, and time has never effaced it."

A pathetic, worn, little package, carefully arranged, and lovingly annotated, lies cherished among the boy's papers. May we not look into his desolate and lonely heart, realize the wretched condition of his health, read the belief—so often to return—of an early death, from the faded writing on the uppermost envelop: "To be delivered to Mother at my decease, that she may see how I have loved her and wept over her letters to me. May 1850."

He returned to College. His instinctively willing and ambitious spirit persisted. Not even to himself would he acknowledge the depth of the wound—much less to her, whom he wished to spare any suffering. Instead, he wrote:

July 5th 1850—YALE—

DEAR, *dear* MOTHER—I can never describe the feelings which I experienced at finding a letter, post-marked from Newark, and directed in your own hand-writing—so dear to me—in the P. O.—at N. Haven, only five days after I myself saw you depart for Liverpool in the *America!* The idea of your stopping at Halifax, never once occurred to me, and it was the most joyful surprise I could have received, to hear that you had proceeded thus far on your journey from the *New* to the *Old* World, in safety and happiness.

I knew that you would be distressed by our seperation when once you found yourself alone and with only the planks of a vessel between you and the ocean, more than you could be while I was yet with you and we saw each other every hour. The anticipation of trouble (some say) is worse than the reality, but I know we have *both* felt that although it is a sad thing to look forward-to, this severing of heart-ties, yet the actual laceration is far more acute. But I can say and I rejoice that I can (on your account) with Agog, that "the bitterness of death is past," and although I have suffered—you can tell how exquisitely—yet the receipt of your messenger from Halifax, seemed the token of bright joys and happiness in the future. Since then I have been chastening my soul—it has been growing calmer and calmer—and a holy quiet and confidence in love makes me now comparatively cheerful. Yes Mother, I can answer your question! I can and will be as happy as Faith and Hope can make the soul. From this seperation commences a new era in my life-work, and I keep my eye on *your* progress—*you* are my "*Star of the East*" to guide me to that true worship which purifies, and the innate elevation, which follows the heart trusting itself to the true path of duty.

I am more of a Man than I was six weeks ago, though I have many a torrent to bear-up-against this minute. I begin to feel the necessity of self-action. But it is idle for me to take up so much *precious* room, in detailing my own feelings—*You* know what a son experiences at the temporal loss of such a Mother, by contrast with your own grief at the seperation from so unworthy a son as myself. It is sufficient to let you know that I mean to be happy, and all that will keep me from attaining this end will be my fears for your own Happiness. Be assured you will have no cause to be sorrowful on my account.

Since the *America* sailed I have passed my time in the old dull routine of college life, and the excitement of Yale politics. I have looked anxiously in the papers for the news of the arrival of the *America* at Liverpool, but it is not time yet for me to get that. I shall hear the welcome tidings in a few days at most. I have not heard from dear Charlie (dearer than ever now) since you left, but I wrote him immediately on the receipt of your note. I had a beautiful, kind, letter from 'Sister Fanny' [1] the other day. She *is* a *sweet* girl. I believe all our friends are well and doing well. I put these items in this part of my letter, to satisfy your anxiety as soon as possible.

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[1] [His cousin Fanny Dodge.]

"Daddy Barker"—Good old man, has had occasion to pass through N. Haven and spent a night and a day here to see me! I was delighted at the honor. He speaks of you and Father in terms of the deepest affection, but is somewhat pained I see, that a "Daily" has not been sent him containing a beautiful little sonnet he wrote and handed to you at your departure. He has given me some graphic descriptions of the courtship of Mr. K— and yourself, and I have been much amused with his benevolent simplicity. He reminds me of the "Vicar of Wakefield."

Mr. Lord went over to N. York with me the morning you sailed. I *admire* him, from the bottom of my heart. I have, with great difficulty (they are so little known) procured a copy of his poems, and am lost, in ecstasy and wonder at the sublimity of his "Niagara"—the calm and holy and grand philosophy of his "Worship" and the majesty and elegance of his "Ode to England" especially his address to Wordsworth in it—whom he imaged to himself as old and blind.

"For so were Milton and Mæonides!"

He says—speaking of Niagara—

"and joy was in my heart as of a God
At birth of a new world!"—

What an intellect he has! Will this be my fate—to be forgotten and unknown? I am in a great quandary, whether to write in accordance with my knowledge of the truth, and paint my visions not revealed to *all*—or to seek popularity by cockney rhymes and sentiments appreciated by *every one*, after the manner of Longfellow and Tennyson—It is love of fame and ambition, in array against pure and noble feelings that urge me not to stoop to the tastes of the mob! Give me your advice. I know which is proper, but with the melancholy example of Lord before me I know which way will be strewed with flowers and which with thistles. I dread to decide on this point.

You are now on the *holy ground* of "Merrie England"! Oh! if I could transport myself for *one half hour* wherever I chose, how speedily I would be by your side! Yet I can do so in spirit if not in body—in the guise of a sheet of paper—scrawled and scribbled over by hands trembling with filial love, bedewed by eyes brimming with tears. I can say "Habeas animam" if not "Habeas corpus."

How long before you will see Rogers? Please write me immediately I am very anxious. Remember my little hobbies and foibles. You know I am a good deal of a *virtuoso* in collecting autographs etc. Give me accounts of the sights you see, the spots of interest you visit—Of the castled crags of Britain and the ivied abbeys of old England.

Please not show this hasty, burning, ardent letter to anyone. My deepest reverence and love to Father—My respect to Stevens —I am busy writing a poem in the majestic blank verse of our language, on Music—it will be philosophical and modelled for beauty and grandeur—together with an 'Ode to Romance' and numerous shorter pieces.

I am at the head of my class—(my *best* friends tell me) in composition. But no one here cares for any one but himself and it is not the greatest *men*, but the greatest *favorites* who receive the class honors!

And now, dear Mother, farewell for a season! Gods grace and blessing be with you! Wherever you are is sacred soil to me and you will always have *one* home in the breast of

Your affectionate son
EDMUND—

Yale Nov. 4th 1850

My Dear, Dearest Mother, Let me, at first, thank you a thousand times, for your frequent and beautiful letters. Indeed, you have not forgotten or neglected me. I could not wish for kinder remembrance, even from my *Mother!* But in your last letters, (I have received six—one from Halifax, do from London, do from Paris do from Lake Geneva—two from *Turin*) you mention that you have received but one from me, and that through Mr. James, and delicately express a hope that I have not forgotten you. Since that letter, I have written *two* and directed them to Mr. Dennit, as you requested. I presume however that you have received them by this time. If not I shall feel very badly, for not only had I expended much time and paper in telling you my whole heart, but had taken great pains to make them cheering and comforting to a Mother, from whom it is always my fate to be seperated. They were very long and I was *happy* in writing them, for I endeavored to make them real *home-birds-of-message*, which, if they did not trill such luscious notes in your ears, as the songsters of Italy, would, at least, fill your *heart* with the truest music of Nature, the melody of a Mothers love. For the last six weeks, however, I have not written, for the best reason in the world, which you shall shortly know.

I am forced to crowd as much as possible into these small sheets, and therefore shall at once proceed to tell you *about myself*. For I hold it is no egotism for a son to open his inmost soul to his mother, and I *know* that *you* will feel more interested in this account, than in any other part of my letter. Twelve weeks ago—or, let me begin at the beginning. You know, that when you sailed for Europe, I was in a miserable condition. Without a true friend that could feel and think with me, on the continent. At College, you know how badly I felt, about the charge—that you wrote my Poem. I was then the most unpopular man in my class. And *you* know how distressing it is in Youth, to be longing for love and sympathy, in vain. To be ambitious and too proud to solicit favor, at the same time. Well, the long and short of it is, I felt ready to shoot myself, or do some such foolish thing, when you left. But as I rode up to Yale in the cars, that dreary, *lonely* afternoon, I thought over my loss, and of the detested position I was going back to occupy. And, at that time, I mentally resolved, to *alter* that position. I resolved to go back, and, although I despised and ever shall despise, college and *especially class* honors, (knowing in what a miserable way they are generally obtained) to fix on some elevated mark, to pick out some particular honor, and strive for it with all my might and main. This I did for *your* sake, *utterly*, *entirely*. It is the only return I can make for your deep love and tenderness. I mean, that, if we must be always catching glimpses of each other and then seperating (like Evangeline and her lover) you shall hear of me in a way that will make you proud and happy.

And now let me tell you the plan on which I started. I had by no means neglected, during the preceding terms of my course, the improvement of my mind. I have never aimed at a very high rank in the recitation room, but to give you some idea of what I *did* do, I will mention some of the Authors whom I studied attentively during that time. Not to adopt their doctrines at my present age, but to learn and improve. Among them were

Hazlitt—D'Israeli—Burke—Coleridge—Kant—Leibnitz—Humboldt—Hunt—Macaulay—the Poets from venerable Geoffrey Chaucer, down to Wordsworth—etc., etc., etc.

I determined to make friends, if possible with some of my class, and go to work. I resolved to take the *Class Valedictory Poem*, and an *editorship* of the *Yale Lit. Mag.* I soon found that I *could* make friends. They procured for me, last term, the honor of a poem to be delivered before the societies of Yale, in Linonian Hall. This was the great turning point. I went to Norwich in vacation, spent six weeks in writing my Poem, came back and delivered it four weeks ago.

Before I tell you the result of this exploit, let me explain a little of my ideas and plans. There is no class in college (nor has there ever been) a class so large and distinguished for talent as our own. If an honor is gained over the "Class of '53" it is done by *talent* and the one that gains it must be a smart man. Now, there are no less than seven in the class besides your son, who make pretensions to the *divine afflatus!* I have all these to contend with, but one however, is acknowledged by the class and myself, to be *my* rival. His name is *Kent.* You know the usual—shallow, Sophomorical style of College poetry. Kent had a poem in Linonia six months ago. He made a vast improvement on the common average of the public poems. But after all, *his* was a mere heap of balderdash. I resolved to go and work on my poem, to make it perfect in its *artistic* construction, to begin with. To study *effect*—to make it "take." At the same time, (though possessing too much reverence for the great Masters, to *dare* to attempt a true philosophic poem, at my age—in public) I made it as perfect as a poem infinitely below the first rank, but far above the second, could be.

I will not, however, describe the poem. In two weeks (when I have finished some important business), I will copy it off and send it to you. Then you can judge for yourself of it.

But let me tell you, romance aside, the result. Few had heard of me in any favorable way. And when the Professors, Tutors, Students and Critics, of Yale, listened to a poem so totally different from what they had ever before heard in Yale, so entirely artistic and melodious, the effect was perfectly electric. I was cheered and applauded by hundreds to my very hearts content. I was toasted, congratulated in every way. That night was the proudest one of my life, and when I heard the *bravos* ringing in my ears, I actually thought I could see *you* before me and it gave me strength to deliver it in a manner that astonished myself.

Since that it has been one continual ascent with me. The very next day, I was waited upon by committees of the two most honorable Junior Societies—ΨΩ and ΔKE and requested to pledge myself to join their fraternities. Every one seems to love me now and wish to put me forward.

Now do not take this for the rhapsody of a school-boy. I have been in College long enough to know that a swallow does not make a summer, nor one night's success a victory. The reason I am pleased is this. The great crisis is passed with me. I have perfect confidence in myself though at the same [time] I am learning to *suspect* myself too. *I have succeeded by my own ability alone, in overthrowing the enormous weight of prejudice against me and have established a basis on which if I "take heed that I stand" I am sure to rise.* I have got to work and keep up my reputation. We have written compositions, now, for a term, and I am considered by my class-mates as the best writer in my class.

Now I am aware that all this sounds very egotistical, but you seem to me as a *sister*, and I must tell you my hopes and fears. I would be too modest to do so, but I am never affected, and when I know that it will make you happy, to tell you that the only trouble I, (that have floated so long on a sea of troubles) at present suffer, is your absence, I must fain do so.

Oh! Mother! I do miss you. I want you near me where I can tell you everything, read you my productions, hear yours, lay my head on your breast and gaze in your eyes with holy love. I am fast catching up with you, Mother. You will hear of me before long.

In two weeks, I will send you my Poem, with some critical remarks, to let you know at what stage of the "Prelude" I am at present. All I can say with regard to my prospects is, that they lie in my own power to make them good or evil. The skies are bright before me.

One thing more. I know that Father if he sees this letter will be disgusted at the enthusiasm and *egotism* it contains. *Now Mother, I adjure you by all that is sacred to both of us, do not* *let him see or hear, the preceeding six pages.* It is for a very particular reason, which I will tell you at some future time. Write me that you have not shown them to him. *Do not read them to him.*

I resolved not to write you again till I had either succeeded or failed in my Poem. I do not feel happy because these college fools admire it. I would give more for the approbation of Father, than for all the Professors and Tutors in creation. They have no taste. But I feel happy, because I have shaken myself, like Sampson, have tried my strength, and have *forced* them to acknowledge my claims.

Now I have given you an idea of my present position at Yale, and believe me, dear Mother, I only tell it to you, in order that you may sympathize with me in my happiness as you always have done in my troubles.

What dear and beautiful letters you have written me. I have always taken them from the P. O. at night, and when I have read them in my lonely, melancholy, fourth-story room, they have sounded in my brain exactly like the surf at a distance. They always set me a-dreaming, and ring old chants, and legends and ancient feelings in my ear, till I seem myself to be with you, wandering over Gothic castles, or down the sunny Rhine. Then I open my window and look out upon the stars, thinking you are beholding the same in Italy, and the night becomes holy to me. I cannot tell you, Mother, how utterly I am rapt (if I may use the expression) in you, and the reason is, *not simply because you are my* Mother, but because you are the *only one* in the world, who ever could feel with me. If my good angel were, this moment, to grant me a wish, I would instantly cry—"Let me speak but for an hour face to face with my Mother, for verily, no letter of words can tell all I would utter."

"If I could only be with you" is my constant thought. I am impatient to hear of your public reception by the King of Sardinia. Tell me all about it. Sometimes I wickedly chuckle over the thought—"How do the Stedmans and those other malicious nobodys, who have ever treated *you* with such despicable backbiting and insolence, feel now, when they see the dignified and elevated position you occupy."

I am seriously anxious about your health. I am not well myself, but am taking measures to secure my constitution, though sometimes I seem to hear a voice whisper in my ear—"What thou doest, do quickly!" But *you*, Mother, know how dear you are to me and to all. Pray do not spend the damp winter in Turin. Run down to Florence or Naples, or perhaps to glorious old Rome. Think how much more you will enjoy yourself there, where you will not only have the *bona-fide* sky of Italy above your head, but the works of the great Masters around you.

I thank you for your assurance that you will not forget that your son is somewhat of a virtuoso.

I have been very kindly invited by Aunt White to spend the Christmas vacation in N. York, and shall do so if Mr. S. will allow it. By the way, Cousin Mary has ushered into the world a young Matson, and both babe and Mother are "as well as can be expected."

Charlie is at Andover, doing finely. I have not read your letters to the *Daily* [*Advertiser*], for the simple reason that I have not received the numbers.

I, sometimes, when I look around my old room, up in the fourth story of the oldest College, and see the walls mouldy and crumbling, the floor full of rat-holes and destitute of carpet and the scanty furniture in my room; and when I hear the wind whistling through the holes, think of you in your splendid apartments at Turin, and wonder what you would think. I philosophize and am perfectly content. Still I am in want of money, for last year I did not spend but three-hundred dollars, and yet Uncle says that I exceeded my income and must retrench. I don't see how I *can* get along with anything less. My society expenses are considerable, and I cannot give them up, for if I wish the Valedictory Poem, I must be run as a candidate by some powerful society in opposition to my rival.

You cannot imagine how much scheming and intrigue there is in College. I shall have to engage in it to a certain extent, if I wish to succeed, but depend upon it, I shall act honorably, which is more than I can say for my rivals.

Tell me everything that you do, will you Mother? You see I open the windows of my heart to *you*. Tell me truly how your cough is. I have had a slight cough and pain in my side owing to application to my poem, but, as I said before, am taking measures to stop it.

What do you intend to do about publishing. I am so proud of you, that I am impatiently waiting for your *début*. I am in doubt whether to publish, myself.

But it is time for me to close this long, long letter, in which, probably, the monosyllable "I" is the most frequent of all words, and next the disyllable of Mother.

Now, tell me if you are happy where you are. Is everyone kind to you? That you may be perfectly at ease on my account, I here declare, that I never was so happy as I am now. I was happy, all the time I was writing my beautiful Poem, wholly, entirely bound up in my Art. I have now an Oration, a Critical Review of Tennyson—and some dozen compositions (I write the compositions of about a tenth of my class) on hand and am very busy, but as soon as possible will send you my Poem. You may read *that* to Father, but not this letter. And now, dear Mother, Good-bye. God bless you and preserve you—think of me—I know you do, and rest assured I will make you happy by the course and conduct of

Your absent affectionate son
Edmund Clarence Stedman.

The somewhat morbid sensitiveness, the result of his longing for love and sympathy, confessed to his mother, made Stedman believe that he was unpopular with his class. This filled him with a desire to test the affection of his friends. He laid his plans carefully. A note saying that he had committed suicide was left where the boys, who habitually gathered in his room for talk and fun, would be sure to see it. All his things were arranged in such wise as to prove that their owner was indeed never to return. His stage setting complete, he crawled under the bed, where, from his cramped quarters, he could witness the effect that his death would have upon his comrades. After a tedious wait, in a position so uncomfortable that he realized life under any condition was better than his present state, the expected bang at the door came. How his heart beat, when, surprised at not receiving their usual hearty welcome, a group of fellows burst into his room. In a flash his note was read—but, unfortunately, a keen-eyed lad discovered its author under the bed. Such a scoring was then given the dead Stedman that he came to "life" more quickly than he had intended.

The poem which he read before Linonia, in his first term Sophomore, was "The Rime of the Elle-King." In early editions of his collected poems, Mr. Stedman included an interlude from it, which he felt was really a musical song for a mere boy to have written, but he requested that it should be omitted in any final edition.

During the Summer, he had prepared his "Purgatorio," for *The Tomahawk*, which, the following Winter, occupied a full page in that coarsely satirical paper, which was published by the Alpha Sigma Phi Society of the Sophomore class, in opposition to the Kappa Sigma Theta paper, *The Banger*. The theme of "Purgatorio" is the "smoking out" of a freshman, by name Eastman, or, in the poem, Homoriens, and is a boyish imitation of the revered *Don Juan*, showing also a friendship with the classics, while peppered with college fun. "It was my first printed screed," he says, "and was thought a great thing—especially by its long-haired little author." *The Tomahawk*, which was intended to be published once a year, ended after its first issue.

Thoroughly encouraged by his new standing at college, young Stedman's next resolve was to compete for the Sophomore prize in English Composition. To offer an essay appears to have been the custom, but our poet chose instead a poem. It was in twenty-nine stanzas, entitled "Westminster Abbey," with the following "Argument."

I–III	The Poem—commences with a reference to the heroes of Ancient Greece and Rome, showing that, although the early splendor of these nations has passed away, yet their hopes still linger around the shrines of their great men;—and that Liberty, Poesy, and Fame, still call loudly, from these holy spots, to Patrotism.

IV	It goes on to show that it is with England as with the classic nations. Genius and Virtue are not confined to the days of Eld, nor, alas! are Death and Decay. Therefore in England, as in Greece and Rome, are the tombs of the "Mighty Dead" held sacred,—and therefore should they ever be.
V–IX	It apostrophizes Westminster Abbey.—It speaks of its beauty—of its antiquity—of the memories that cluster around it—of the pageants it has witnessed—of the funerals and coronations that have there taken place—and of the knights who have thronged within it.—
X–XI	It shows that it is not for the old legends which haunt the chapels of Westminster,—not for its beauty—not for its music or its romance—nor entirely for its old renown, we reverence it;
XII	But for the sublimity which attends the graves of the Great and Good.
XIII–XVI	It proceeds to take notice of some of the sepulchres in Westminster Abbey, and first the tombs of the Royal Trio—viz.—Queen Mary of England, "Good Queen Bess," and Mary of Scotland.
XVII–XX	Then the shrines of National Glory and Patriotism,—It notices the statues of Pitt and Fox,—of Newton the Philosopher—of Burke and Sheridan.—
XXI–XXII	It then turns to the dearest and noblest portion of Westminster—the "Poets Corner," and first speaks of "the glorious masters of the olden song"—Chaucer and Spenser.
XXIII–XXV	It continues the description of the Poets, and mentions the "Illustrious Three"—Milton—Shakespeare and Dryden.—

XXVI	It notices the monuments of "Rare Ben Jonson," Addison and Goldsmith,—and then changes, from these particulars, to the main subject.
XXVII	It enters on the *Conclusion*, by referring to the commencement of the Poem, where Italy and Greece are mentioned. It pays a tribute of honor to these countries, but dedicates the Song to England.—
XXVIII–XXIX	The Poem—ends with an expression of feeling in regard to that nation, and a Eulogy on her greatness and fame.

FINIS

The first prize, a copy of "The Pilgrim's Progress," edited, with a life of John Bunyan, by the Reverend Robert Philip, was awarded the young poet, February, 1851. A cousin, the Reverend Erskine N. White, Yale '54, writes: "I remember well the interest and excitement in college circles, caused by his prize poem 'Westminster Abbey' . . . The day that he finished it, I called at his room and found him with a circle of intimate friends receiving their congratulations. The poem itself, I remember, was written upon separate sheets of paper which he had pinned together, making a long scroll, and tacked like a banner upon the side wall of his room, so that he could inspect it as a whole and criticize and correct."

Many years afterward, in writing to Eugene Field, on his exquisite penmanship, Mr. Stedman says: "I, too, once loved to make the garnishment 'fit' the rhyme,—and even handed in my Sophomore competition Poem at Yale, so beauteously devised with Old English headings, decorative initials, and ornate Greek quotations, as to rouse some sense of æsthetics in the most Calvinistically indurated and prosaic set of rhetorical dullards ever assembled as judges. Yes, and like Balaam, they *had* to bless me and give me the first prize, though holding me little better than one of the unsanctified."

"Westminster Abbey" was published in the *Yale Literary Magazine* for March, 1851. That number contained also Stedman's first printed prose piece, "Truth in Beauty" an allegory, "which," he says, "shows that I read Poe and Spenser." A later issue of the Magazine had his "Ode to Pastoral Romance," which Mr. Stedman used to say, sounded all right, and exhausted all the words he then knew. His mates thought its fifth strophe "immense." The Ode was reprinted in his first book: "Poems, Lyrical and Idyllic," 1860. Other poems, written during this zestful era, which were preserved in that first book, were "The Rime of the Elle-King," "Astræa," "The Album," and "Charley."

What could have turned this rising tide? The wound made six months before was deepening. He felt adrift, purposeless—deserted. Perhaps the following "characteristic" letter, which was undoubtedly one of many, was not the stimulus needed to encourage a spirit always responsive to a sympathetic word:

NORWICH Jany 16th 1851

DEAR EDMUND,

Your letter dated 8th, mail'd 11th was recd here 14th Jany I forward the amt of your bills & a letter recd. here 2 weeks ago which we intended to send by Harland but forgot to do so.

Your Board bill at $2.31 & the $5 extra will amount to $30.41. If Mrs. Collins meant to charge you $2.37 ½ per week she has made her bill too small by 72 Cents—See that it is made right to her.

The College bill is not supposed to be questioned. It certainly cannot be accused of short charges if I understand it. There is something a little curious about it. The *etc* is a rather *sweeping* adjunct to the 2nd item in the bill.

My Lord Coke, in his Comments on Littleton says *An etc contains much good Law*. And in this Bill, if it means "*Coal 4.07*," marked in the margin, its legality or equity need not be questioned;

but, if the Coal is to [be] added, as you have the free use of the "*Hod*" you may keep yourself comfortably warm in your Attic.

The three general items that follow are, I suppose all of the *Damage* family tho' the first bears a different name. It certainly springs from the same family. I think the race will not (it is so numerous) soon become extinct. The meaning of the items cannot be questioned. For there is in the first place My Lord Coke's "*Certainly to common intent;*" and 2ndly "*To a certain intent in general;*" & 3dly "*To a certain intent in every particular.*"

Why, Edmund, your very bills of College expenses contain all the nice principles of special pleading—Let satisfaction be entered on the record.

Your Bills as rendered amount to the sum of $64.12 including the 72 cents short charge in Mrs. Collin's Bill. I send you a Check on Phoenix Bank Hartford for Sixty-five Dollars. At the Mechanics Bank N. H. where the Thames Bank keeps an account, or at any other Bank in N. H. you can get the money for it without a discount. You will indorse the Check at the Bank where you get the money. Mr. Brewer had no funds in the Mechanics Bank or he would have given me a check on that Bank. I do not consider it very safe to transmit money by Mail.

You will pay these Bills immediately and forward them to me by mail—receipted.

Your expenses for the past year have exceeded your income and I am given to understand if more than the income is expended it must come from me. You will therefore feel the necessity of practising the most severe economy. Take care of your health. Let nothing interfere with your college studies—never pass over a lesson till it is perfectly understood—nor lose a recitation. Don't think any *side honors* will compensate for deficiencies in the studies you are required to pursue with your Class—Let it not be said—"*Stedman falls off—He reads more than he studies.*" Let your *perseverance* be steady, not fitful.

We are in health—Thomas continues to increase in strength. Charles was well last week.

Remember me to Mr. Backus—Hyde—Silliman senior, Kingsley, Hadley etc.

Your sincere friend
and Guardian
JAMES STEDMAN

The old melancholy returned now so often that it was easy, with his inherent love of fun, to drift into the company of his more mature and dashing comrades—many of them high-spirited Southerners. "Stedman, classmate," wrote one, "do you remember the day you frightened that big red-headed classmate, at corner of College and Crown Streets, and dear, loving Grout came to his rescue and deliverance? Your several allies (including me) had nothing to do but to enjoy your getting away with him! for you filled the entire bill, solus."

"I was literally heart broken," Mr. Stedman said, in 1907, in answer to a polite inquiry; "I was an imaginative and excitable boy, and became rather reckless; fell off in all my studies; cut prayers, etc., and excelled only in English composition, and in reading. . . . My nights were spent with beer, whiskey-skin, skittles and howling around town. How I lived through it, I don't know. At the end of sophomore year, I was arrested one night with some older men and taken before the local Dogberry. The others gave false names, paid their fines and got away, but I was recognized by my long hair, and other eccentricities, and reported to the faculty; was rusticated to Northampton, where I passed a summer under the charge of Professor Dudley, a famous Greek scholar, who had a private seminary there. The institution was full of a still wilder crowd than I had met at Yale, and I joined with them in painting the town red, getting in love with the Northampton girls and into trouble generally."

Even in the last summer of his life, he could nerve himself to write thus cheerfully. Although he never referred to those days without a twinge of the old pain, there was always a certain glad and defiant satisfaction, and perhaps hidden pride, that, before the cords tightened, he had had a fling at youth's own freedom.

Poor little beggar (as the English say) of seventeen—the little kid, let loose from his kidnappers, for the first time, old in his dreams, but otherwise the mere sport of circumstance. I *had* doubtless, a passion for letters, art, beauty, and a longing for affection, and they must have brought me through in the end. And I think I have always been keenly sensible of obligations or attachments once formed—have never been able to forget a friend. Still it required few years of responsibility to bring me to a kind of practical common-sense which seems to have amazed my classmates and all who knew me in that brief *Pagan* time of my teens.

A year before his death, Mr. Stedman received a letter, recalling the days at Northampton, that pleased him, and to which he answered:

To the Reverend Alexander S. Twombly.

New York, December 15, 1906.

I had forgotten entirely that the Dudleyites were foresighted enough to have themselves daguerreotyped. It is very good of you to remember the smallest, greenest, most pitiful of them all; although I had been a year at Yale, having entered at fifteen, I was without parents or counsellors, and certainly as wild and unkempt as a one-year-old Texan maverick. Who could have supposed that I would ever become a recognized Philistine, and live to be consulted (and placed under professional burdens) by all dwellers in Philistia?

For my part, I looked with much awe and admiration upon you and the stalwart Lambert. You were the first " muscular Christians " I had ever seen, and I think you must have been almost the earliest young Americans to exemplify the spirit of Charles Kingsley, for example. In after years I met Lambert here on more equal terms, and we were friends and associates to the end of his life. If I have seen you since our separation at Northampton, it escapes my mind, but I retain very clearly the image of your long-legged figure, and forward looking visage, and if I mistake not, you and Lambert cultivated health, morals and sanity, and were our champion pedestrians.

In due time, after my early marriage, I visited Northampton with my two young boys, and told Mr. Dudley that I would gladly place the elder at the "Gothic Seminary." He actually recoiled from the idea, although I promised him that Fred would retreive the Stedman reputation; in this he had no faith at all. But now I take pride in adding that many years afterward, when I was visiting Cable at Northampton, I found both Mr. and Mrs. Dudley, in their beautiful old age, in their same romantic home. They were delighted to see me, had forgotten all about my lurid youthful career, and acted as if I had been an honor, rather than a bewilderment, to the school which it nearly disrupted. . . .

I recall all the fourteen names, with the exception of Simms and Colyer. When the picture was taken, I must have left the Dudley house proper. Croom [1] and I were boarding at the house of Mr. Thayer (former editor of the paper that published "Uncle Tom's Cabin"). His wife was a cousin of John G. Whittier. They lived in Hawley Street. Rice was Francis B. Rice, now at 454 Beacon Street, Boston. He will be glad to hear from you or see you. ("Jim" Rice was my room-mate in Grove Street, New Haven, afterwards, my friend in the War, and I was at his funeral at Dr. Adam's church.) Armstrong led a somewhat reckless life, during my early years in New York; was one of Walker's filibusters, and finally died in a hospital at New Orleans. Despite his archiepiscopal connections, he seemed to be bad through and through. I cannot give you the name between Simms and McKinsey.

From the Reverend Alexander S. Twombly.

December 19, 1906.

You call yourself "wild and unkempt," but if you could see the necktie in the Dudley group, falling down nearly to your waist, you would hardly use the term "unkempt"—and as for the "wildness" it seemed to us merely the natural exuberance of youth.

One episode I remember was your dressing "fair" young Day of Hartford as a girl and giving concerts in the neighboring towns. You may have forgotten it—or never have been in it.

Do you recall the secret society you originated in the Gothic Hall? I can see you now in a black suit, with a skeleton (in white) painted on the front of the suit and a mask for the skull. As I am a "Skull and Bones" man, that little *débacle* was no shock of a permanent sort. I think Armstrong headed the party that fought the Northampton Special police, one 4th of July (when Lambert and I were absent), and led them over a plank which was arranged to give way and flung them into a muddy brook. The court placed several of the offenders under $100. bonds—which resulted, in several of the "suspended" Dudley boys "bouncing the bail" and Mr. Dudley lost several of his paying students, who left between two days for parts unknown.

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[1] Nicholas P. Croom, of Alabama.

The Special policemen showed their black and blue shoulders in the court house.

Can you remember Mr. Dudley's lock-out one cold night, when he was off on a courting excursion at the Senator's house?

Of the " Muscular Christians " you mention, Ned Lambert must have been the substance, myself the shadow—However, we took turns in "saying grace" at table, at the request of Mr. Dudley—and we looked after the younger boarders; once Ned chased Jack Arnot, who had "delirium tremens" over the lawn and we put him to bed.

One of our Southern contemporaries (I think he had a hare-lip) was much enamoured with Sarah Reed, the modest Housekeeper's daughter. It was as good as a play. Mrs. Reed, the said housekeeper, used to have two pies on the table. She distributed one in small doles, then cut out one piece from the second pie and taking knife and fork, quietly disappeared from the table. Either Ned or myself took out a silver fruit knife and distributed the second pie, which Dudley had told Mrs. R. to save, by the aforesaid strategy. . . .

Our legs *were* long and our stride was "Lincolnic," it is true. I was the prize '54 class man for "overspanning" and Ned was usually along. I was also noted at Yale for being the worst songster of the class.

Mr. D's red handkerchief (for snuff), with a white (?) handkerchief for cover—must still be in your mind.

I think you are mistaken as to any possible and imminent "disruption" of the Goth-Sem. by reason of your baneful influence. Ned and I always considered your presence there (with an occasional poem) quite a " card " with the Professor.

To the Reverend Alexander S. Twombly.

New York, April 21 1907.

Now concerning the new photograph of the Dudleyites. I think it has come out very well indeed. I have shown it to a few friends, who all pronounced us a good looking set of fellows, with more sentiment and aspiration in our faces than are exhibited by the modern half-backs and full-backs who figure in the newspaper groups of college teams. With the aid of your key I now recognize more than half of our fellows. Barnes, Lambert, yourself, Armstrong, McGee come back very clearly to me. Very soon after this was taken, Armstrong grew a heavy beard, which made him look ten years older. You know he was precocious, and had been a third-mate at sea, and somewhat wild before they sent him to the Gothic Seminary. Don't you remember that he taught us all something of the manly art of self-defence. He was stage-struck also; used to give imitations of Forrest in Richard III. and Macbeth, and it was through him that the amateur company was formed of which I was the leading lady, and that we ran away from Northampton and gave "Dramatic rehearsals" at Springfield, from which place we departed hastily to avoid arrest for debt. I am much disappointed not to find Croom in the picture. He and I roomed together after leaving the Dudley mansion, at Mrs. Thayer's on Hawley Street, and he was the "advance agent" of our theatrical troupe. The fact is that the skrimmage on the eve of July Fourth and our escapade the next autumn almost broke up the Dudley School, taking away a third of its pupils and much of its prestige. Mr. Dudley, when I saw him in after years, told me that it took a long time for a restoration of his fortunes.

I suppose you remember Miss Wells, daughter of Judge Wells; she was quite a belle with the Dudleyites, and so was Miss —— who lived with her mother at Mrs. Thayer's and with whom both Croom and I, and I think McGee, were desperately in love. Just before your first letter came to me, she and I exchanged letters for the first time in half a century. . . . Some time you may see the whole picture in a book of Reminiscences; in which case, you and I will go down to posterity under one cover.

My! what a little prig I was, with that astonishing cravat and dandified coat-collar; not to speak of the Byronic shirt-collar and flowing hair. . . .

My dear fellow, you are all wrong in respect of the date of this print. It could not have been taken "in the summer of 1850," because I was rusticated and saw Northampton for the first time in the spring of 1851. There is absolutely no doubt about this. I entered college in 1849, and went to Northampton near the close of my sophomore year, and was elected to Psi U,—a Junior society—while still at Dudley's. Although I was two years younger than you, my class was "the famous class of '53," and I was almost the youngest man in it,—Lewis and Teddy Bacon being my only juniors. *You* reached Northampton some months later than I, *in the summer of 1851.*

When Mr. Dudley died in 1896, Mr. Stedman sent this message to his widow:

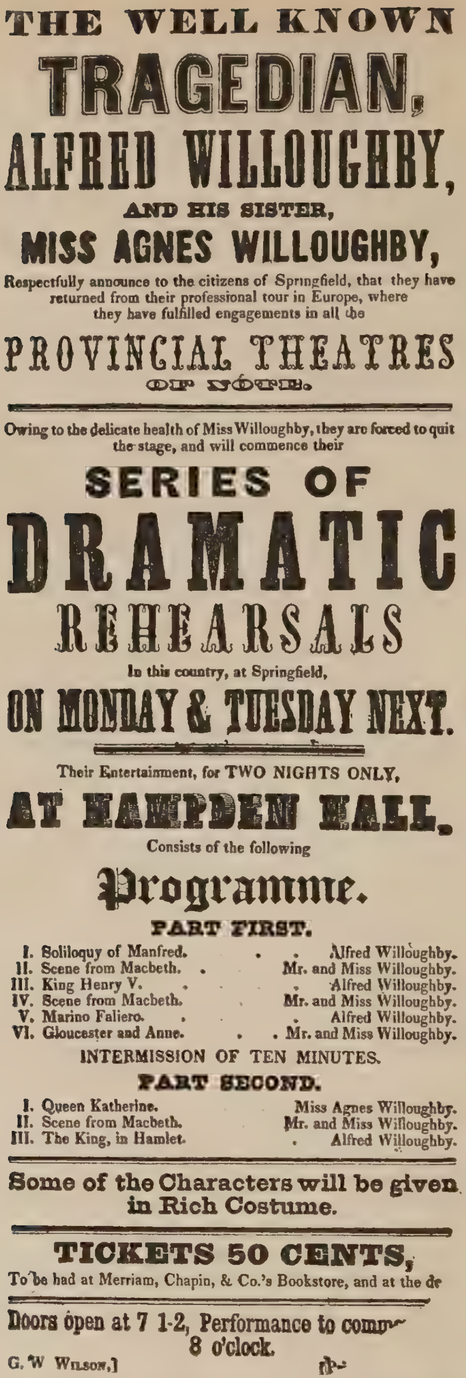
May I not write a line of affectionate sympathy, even while you are suffering your first sense of loss? It is not without a pang of my own that I read this morning the news that your companion of so many years had at last, in the full ripeness of a prolonged and always honored life, passed to his rest. As one of his early pupils, my heart goes out to you in your loneliness and sorrow. It seems but yesterday—although it was in 1851—that you came as a bride to the old School and won us all by your graciousness and true womanhood. We were a wild lot, but the worst of us (such as I) cherished a chivalrous loyalty for you, and was really attracted to your learned and masterful husband. I am glad, indeed, that I chanced to visit him again, but a few years ago,—just as you and he were preparing, I think, to leave the old home. How young, after all, he still seemed, and you still more so!

None can enter into your grief, as I well know, but we can at least give each other the sense of human comprehension and support. Alas! how many times this winter I have suffered bereavement myself—as one by one the friends of my youth have gone over to the majority.

Among the college memorabilia, is the play-bill here reproduced and this item from the *Hampshire Gazette* in December, 1851. They tell their own jolly story. "Miss Willoughby was an 'awfully' pretty girl," Mr. Stedman would say with his merry twinkle.

From the *Hampshire Gazette*, December, 1851.

HUMBUGGED—Our Springfield neighbors were pretty well humbugged last week. A series of "Dramatic Rehearsals" were advertised in the Springfield papers, to take place at Hampden Hall, on Monday and Tuesday evenings last, by the "well known tragedian, Alfred Willoughby, and his sister, Agnes Willoughby,"



THE WELL KNOWN

TRAGEDIAN,

ALFRED WILLOUGHBY,

AND HIS SISTER,

MISS AGNES WILLOUGHBY,

Respectfully announce to the citizens of Springfield, that they have returned from their professional tour in Europe, where they have fulfilled engagements in all the

PROVINCIAL THEATRES

OF NOTE.

Owing to the delicate health of Miss Willoughby, they are forced to quit the stage, and will commence their

SERIES OF

DRAMATIC

REHEARSALS

In this country, at Springfield,

ON MONDAY & TUESDAY NEXT.

Their Entertainment, for TWO NIGHTS ONLY,

AT HAMPDEN HALL,

Consists of the following

Programme.

PART FIRST.

I.	Soliloquy of Manfred.	Alfred Willoughby.
II.	Scene from Macbeth.	Mr. and Miss Willoughby.
III.	King Henry V.	Alfred Willoughby.
IV.	Scene from Macbeth.	Mr. and Miss Willoughby.
V.	Marino Faliero.	Alfred Willoughby.
VI.	Gloucester and Anne.	Mr. and Miss Willoughby.

INTERMISSION OF TEN MINUTES.

PART SECOND.

I.	Queen Katherine.	Miss Agnes Willoughby.
II.	Scene from Macbeth.	Mr. and Miss Willoughby.
III.	The King, in Hamlet.	Alfred Willoughby.

Some of the Characters will be given in Rich Costume.

TICKETS 50 CENTS,

To be had at Merriam, Chapin, & Co.'s Bookstore, and at the d

Doors open at 7 1-2, Performance to comm

8 o'clock.

G. W Wilson,]

Facsimile of the Play-Bill of the Willoughby "Dramatic Rehearsal," in 1851.

who had just returned from a "professional tour in Europe, where they had fulfilled engagements in all the theaters of note," and they had "quit the stage," "owing to the *delicate health of Miss Willoughby*." They were "cracked up" by our Springfield contemporaries, and much interest was felt in Miss Willoughby, and many little attentions shown her, on account of her ill health. They gave rehearsals on Monday evening, which were received with much applause, but by a very thin audience. They then were advised to reduce the price of admission for the next evening, which they were assured would secure a "full house." They announced a reduction of price, but before evening came, they took the cars for the North.

It appears that Mr. and Miss Willoughby were two boys, of genius and talent, but full of fun, who had been studying at Northampton. The great question in Springfield now is—"who are Mr. and Miss Willoughby?"

This adventure ended Stedman's college course. He had been "rusticated" in his third term Sophomore, and he never was permitted to return. He was bewildered by the outcome of this final escapade, which resulted also in the breaking of the engagement with a young girl of Northampton, whom he loved ardently, and to whom he refers, after many years, in his letter to Mr. Twombly. Therefore, as he has written, "I went South with two comrades, and had parlous adventures; but the next spring, 1852, returned North, and secluded myself at my guardian's house in Norwich, Conn., with much Byronic gloom. He had been a member of the Yale faculty in his youth, and endeavored to get me back to college, but my case was flagrant; its noise had gone abroad. Grand old President Woolsey finally informed me—I can remember his very words; and still have the letter—that 'the faculty has voted that while you may not return to Yale, it will not be considered contrary to the comity of colleges that any other institution should receive you.' It was the first time that I had ever seen the word 'comity' and it impressed itself upon my memory."

An essay, "Painting and Poetry Compared as a means of Expression," had been awarded the first prize in his third term Sophomore, but as the writer was then under suspension, the prize was given to another. Two regrets always rankled; these he recalls in the following letter, which he sent to the *Lit* Banquet, in 1903:

The Yale Literary Magazine:

DEAR OLD *Lit.*

Since you are two years my junior, I am not the one to speak of your antiquity. The latest glimpse I have had of you shows you unchanged in countenance, though a little stouter in form,—there's a little more of you to love (as a newspaper said of Parepa Rosa after her three years' stay abroad).

Although I have written Mr. Dudley Lewis that, to my regret, I could not be at your feast, I am not willing to have it pass without a word from me of thanks and congratulations.

However, I have not much right, beyond that derived from your grace, to consider myself other than a very distant kinsman. There is a little bar sinister, you know, in one of the quarterings of my shield. When I went to Yale there were two bright particular stars that seemed to my youthful eyes much to be desired. The chance to wed them was another question. After some preliminary contests it did seem possible that I might figure among the candidates. *Dis aliter visum.* I was comforted somewhat after my involuntary departure from Yale, by the knowledge that the Class Poem had fallen to my comrade, Charlton T. Lewis, who, unlike me, was both a scholar and a poet, and who still is one of the glories of '53.

Then too, I had another honest satisfaction, when the *Lit* gave a welcome to my prize poem, to a high-sounding "Ode to Pastoral Romance" and to a prose fantasia, all in the same year. Even now I believe that the institutions that then did the most for English at Yale, were the *Magazine* as to writing, and the great Societies, as concerns debate. If Linonia and the Brothers had remained, the tide might have set otherwise in certain intercollegiate contests. Yale still has the *Lit*, and may it remain as long, as characteristic, as Yale herself.

And this note, written in 1902, in response to a request from Mr. Dudley P. Lewis, '03, is appropriate for inclusion here: "Voila! I have copied on the vellum print, for the *Lit* office, the only available lines I can find in my prize poem of half a century ago. And I shall be very proud to have some memento of 'E. C. S.' in the sanctum of to-day—thanks to you. As I grow older, my feelings toward Yale grow tender, and I am glad, especially to have a place in the minds of her men like you, who seem to care for the things I used to care for, but for which the Mater herself cared all too little in my day. I really believe I would have been something of a writer, even a poet, if I had had courses in Literature, under a Professor Lewis or a Lounsbury to understand my needs and longings!"

CHAPTER IV

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

1852–1853

Norwich, March 8, 1852.

My beloved Mother—After conduct which must seem to you cruel and heartless, I am in doubt whether I am still your beloved son. I have not written you for nearly a year! You are in very delicate health—you are thousands of miles from home and from those you love—more than all, you are my Mother, my *dear* Mother, and yet I have been so perverse—so wicked, as not to write you for a year. And while *I* have neglected the sacred duties of a son, and have in no way administered to your happiness for so long a time, *you* have still thought of me and acted for me, have still been the loving and sympathizing friend that you ever were, when we were nearer to each other. For during this time, I have received letters from you—one came yesterday, and is now open before me:—it is dated October 8th—my birthday—a day which, as you say, has "ever been sacred to your prayers, your blessings, and your words of love for me," and a day on which I thought long and lovingly and *remorsefully* of you. . . .

Your letter, Mother, is like yourself, full of a love not quenched by neglect or cruelty—full of all a Mother's fervor, and a Mother's yearning towards an absent and, perhaps, recreant son; and do you believe that the love which ever drew us together in spirit, through the twelve long years of separation we have experienced, and which still burns truer and purer than ever in your own heart, has at length been smothered in mine, by distance or my daily pursuits—be they good or bad? *Can* you believe that an affection which grew stronger and stronger (as you yourself know) up to the moment when we last clung to each other on the deck of the steamship, began at that time to wither and die away, until at length the silence of a year gives proof that it has utterly perished? No, my dear, *dear* Mother, the growth of a lifetime is not cut down by one, two or three years absence. If nothing else, it would become a habit, which *could not* be thrown aside! And so, before I say aught of the motives which have influenced me, let me tell you as earnestly and gladly as I can, that I never loved you so devotedly as I do this moment—that every day on which I have delayed to write, you have been before my eyes and have seemed to reproach me—that in my happiest hours, my happiness has been incomplete without you—and that in hours of heart-sickness and suffering (all have such periods) I have longed for your presence and sympathy.

It has not been, as you suggest, from mistaken kindness—from the desire that you should not know my troubles that I have not written you; for, in the first place, I have never, since you left, been so unfortunate, but that there was some corresponding honor which would more than take away the pain of the misfortune, in your mind and my own; and again, I always judge of you by myself and I know that if you are of like temperament, you wish to know the minutest action of my life. Consequently, when we meet (Oh! may it be soon!) you shall know all the bad as well as the good. I shall have no hesitation in telling you the wildest of my wild hours. Nor am I—I trust—gloomy and misanthropic as I was when a boy,—taking narrow views of human nature, supposing myself the *only* unhappy person in the world, rolling my misery as a sweet morsel under my tongue. I have suffered—it is true. My childhood was very, very unhappy, but I humbly trust that it has had a good effect—that I have learned in suffering and have become more chastened and calm.

You have read "Wilhelm Meister," and you also know by experience, the education, the apprenticeship, which one of our temperament has to go through, before we can discern the under-current of life which moves through all things. Therefore I grow happier every day I grow older—though I have perhaps, more practical trouble to encounter. I have learned by mingling with men and women, that every one has his sorrow; it is the common lot. I learn daily to take the world easier, to "lend all my ear and few my tongue," in short, I am trying to make an objective character out of my subjective nature. Whether I am right in doing what your sister poet—Mrs. Browning [calls]—"falling from inner entity" I know not, I only know that I am far happier. Truly, Mother, *common-sense* is the basis of *worldly* philosophy, and its teachings are grand cures for heart-aches! They tell one, after all, how little he really learns.

You remember that I told you in the last of my letters, (if you can remember so far back!) that I had been successful in an antique poem, and promised to send you copies of that and other pieces. My success filled my time with business of the same kind, and it took me three or four months to prepare copies. During all that time I was growing older—rapidly changing—meeting new things (new to me) every day. Now I know not whether I can make you understand what I mean, but try to do so:—*you* may perhaps by sympathy of experience, if others could not.

Well, in these three months, so much had happened that I wished to tell you, I had read and thought and written so much that I wanted you to know—that I knew not where to begin, or how to condense, so that you should see me as I really was—for I ever wished and still do wish, to be egotistical with *you*, to have you know me body and soul, to turn myself inside out to you, and you alone. You thought of me, of course, as you last saw me, but I was not the same person. My mental growth had been rapid. I felt *I could not write* you—in the same way that the Artist feels he cannot make his work equal his ideal. So I put it off day after day, week after week. Every day made it worse. How I longed to write you and yet could not. And the struggle between desire and insufficiency has tormented me for a year. Do you, can you understand my meaning. I have tried, as you see, to analyze the feeling. It would seem farfetched to most, but I have ventured to attempt to set it down on paper in this letter to you; but, as I read it over, I see it is not what I mean, yet hope you, of all others, will appreciate it, and know that such a feeling would deter me (or you) from writing, more effectually than sin or sorrow or shame.

My fault was the permitting such a feeling to triumph over the duty of dispelling a Mother's anxiety by even a single word—if no more. But I could not write you unless I told you all, and all my experience I knew not how to relate. I have at length, written you thus, telling you nothing of myself, but that I am happy, because to write in any other way brings up the impediments I have mentioned. These feelings are chimerical to many, but I hope they will not seem so to you. But I have done wrong, very wrong,—I would say cruel, had it not pained me as much as you —I ought to have written continually if only to let you know I was alive. Rest assured that I am now doing well and am happy. Believe me your last appeal should not have been slighted had it reached me sooner, for no son could withstand it. You said you should count the days, allowing me one in which to write. Ah! my poor Mother—how many weary, weary days you have counted! I shall never, never forgive myself. But regrets are in vain—I will apply myself to the task of atoning for my injury. Hear me make a determination—"I will never again neglect the sacred duty of a son!" May this letter be a beam of sunlight after the long and dreary night you have gone through!

I have heard that you are coming home this summer. Do, my dear Mother, do come. I need you. What a joyful meeting will ours be! I hope you will find me more of a man—at least I am of that age when one "thinks himself a man." How I shall delight to hear you whisper of the "brave Old World"—of the beauty, the romance and the intrigue of a foreign Court—of Florence and Venice—of Rafaello and Titian and Angelo—of Dante and Petrarch and Tasso,—but it's no use!—wait till we meet. And I will bore you to death with my scribblings and my little successes and my loves and "scrapes" and everything else, bad and good, about me that can interest a mother. I know that you will come back the same dear friend and dearer Mother that left me. Oh! if you only knew the longing—the *longing* with which I stretch out my arms to you from this side of the Atlantic! Pray do not spend another Winter in Europe, but as soon as the warm weather comes—fly back with the birds of passage to your *home*. You have been away long enough. Must we always be separated? And let me ask you, my dear Mother, when you hear of me as you would not wish to hear of one you love, remember that I have never had *your presence* to guard me from vice—remember that, though wild, I have never been vicious—remember my temperament, my love for the social pleasures of life—my earnest search for sympathy, and—estimate your son by his temptations. *Your love* will yet make my name shine bright. My word is not *in memoriam*, but *in futurum*.

Please answer this with a letter of forgiveness. I acknowledge all my fault—but know that you will receive a "prodigal son" to your bosom, for the early and eternal love of a Mother cannot fail. And Mother, *do come home!* Give my respectful love to my step-father. When I was very young he said a few words to me, full of deep wisdom, which I could not *then* understand. But I never forgot them (it was "bread cast upon the waters") and they have lately influenced my studies and tastes particularly my literary tastes—more than I can tell you. His few remarks taught me to look for something deeper in nature and the mind of man than I recognized before and I think gave me larger and truer ideas of the aims of philosophy and poetry. I often wonder how he came to talk so to a boy—and when I think of my pert attempts to speak and not listen—I am ashamed to think how he must have smiled at my impudence.

Now I have written you all about *I*. Please tell me about yourself. Tell me also—that you still love me, and that you will come home. You said something in a letter to Uncle about my character, which I am sorry for. I do not like to repeat it. I am sure that you will not grieve me again. A kiss to Clem and Mary, I did not know they were in Europe till you wrote me. That was hardly fair! I met Thomas sometime ago and he was very gentlemanly and kind.

With a heart full of love and longing for you to come home, I am my dear, *dear* Mother, Your most affectionate son

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

P. S. "Precious jewels are contained in small caskets," and I am sure that my little Mother, if she chooses, can maintain an unrivalled position among the brilliant dames of the Italian Court. Write me of the *attention you receive*. It will delight me as much as yourself.

One of his "wild hours" that Stedman promised to recount to his mother was no doubt a tale remembered by a friend of his mature years—Professor James Herbert Morse: After leaving Yale, Stedman visited a college chum on an old Virginia plantation. A custom—more honored in the breach than in the observance—prevailed in the hospitable mansion, where he was a guest; the custom of opening the shutters, and welcoming the various guests by sending to their rooms a quart pitcher of mint julep, intended as a loving-cup for the household. This time it was left first at the door of young Stedman by an old, white-haired darkey, who returned later to take the pitcher on its further rounds. When the black-and-white messenger came for this purpose, the old man looked at the pitcher, then at the dark-eyed youth; then his eyes began to twinkle, and, as he went downstairs with the empty pitcher, his head shook and his shoulders rattled. In his desire to respond gallantly to Southern hospitality, the slim son of Yale had done more than was expected of him to uphold the honor of his *alma mater*.

Without money, and too proud to ask for it, how did he pay the expenses of the journey? It is known that he and his friend gave recitations, songs and dances, whereby the pay was probably as much in the fun of the thing as in the dollars,—the last not few, tradition says. The lad also blacked boots, and was proud of doing it better than others, whence more dollars.—But, be it noted, when asked his name, who he was, etc.,—"That would not be fair to my friends."

Back in Norwich again, while his character was rapidly maturing, what was Stedman doing? His guardian, exasperated with his escapades, and the resulting inability to restore his nephew to his class at College, felt that the best course for his ward to pursue was the study of law. For several months, Stedman applied himself diligently to this profession, studying under his uncle's supervision, at his law office in Norwich. It must have been a gratification to the young man that his mates at College did not forget him, and that his songs, written for the occasion, were sung by his Junior Class at the exercises of the Presentation of the Wooden Spoon. Surely, on that day in May, he, in Norwich, heard gayly the echo of the lines he had written:

> Let others sing the wedding ring—
> The varied sweets of love,
> Our voices raise the nobler praise
> Of that for which *we* strove;
> Let others tell of Love's first kiss,
> And chant the Honey-Moon,
> Who would exchange for that, the bliss
> Of him who wins the Spoon!

Chorus—
Hi! Juniors! Ho! Juniors!
Sound aloud the tune,
While joyously we sing to all
The glories of the Spoon!

And the chanting of his new words for the air, *Roll on Silver Moon:*

In the sky of the future it glistened on high
And each Fresh by the light of the Moon,
Swore bravely to conquer, or nobly to die,
In the glorious cause of the Spoon.

. . . .

But now, when—no longer a Fresh or a Soph—
Each blade is a gentleman—June,
We find that, however we struggle and puff,
Only one can inherit the Spoon!

. . . .

Then shout for the hero who *gobbles* the prize,
All happiness go with the boon!
May smiles without number, and ladies' bright eyes,
Greet proudly the Man-with-the-Spoon!

Chorus—
Go on, Wooden Spoon, cheer the Freshman on his way,
With the promise of fame when a June,
For we ever, evermore, will remember this day,
And huzza for the *Man-with-the-Spoon.*

On January 7, 1852, E. S. Wells had issued the first number of the *Norwich Tribune*, of which he was the editor and proprietor. On the 28th of July, the paper cordially introduced an "Ode to Pastoral Romance" by E. C. S., reprinted from the *Yale Literary Magazine.* Other poems, written during the college years, followed in October. In November, 1852, "Astræa," originally published in the *Independent* [New York],—which was its young author's first appearance in an important periodical,—was reprinted in the *Norwich Tribune.* These connections with that journal brought the young poet to the notice of the Norwich public. Whenever he could, he visited the newspaper office, watching the make-up of the paper, becoming thoroughly familiar with every detail of its printing, editing, and publishing departments, and discussing them with Mr. Wells.

The desire that he had had at college to be one of the editors on the *Yale Literary Magazine*, now suggested the possibility of his becoming editor of the *Norwich Tribune*. This resolve to identify himself with journalism had led Stedman, when passing through New York the previous winter, to call upon the great editor, Horace Greeley, whom he found reading a newspaper, while indulging in a rare visit from a bootblack. With gentle reverence, Stedman had asked "if there was any vacancy on the staff?" Without glancing from his newspaper—the hero had replied in one conclusive word, which nevertheless thrilled his admirer,—"None."

Stedman found that Mr. Wells was quite ready to sell out his interest. The matter was discussed with a Norwich friend, somewhat older than himself, Charles B. Platt, who, under Mr. Wells, had controlled the mechanical department of the paper, and the plan was made to buy the *Norwich Tribune*. James Stedman, while not relinquishing his belief that his nephew should become a lawyer, finally concurred with the young man's desire to earn his living by other means, and advanced the necessary amount to be paid back to him when Stedman should come of age.

The paper came under the control of Messrs. Platt and Stedman on November 17, 1852. The former, having the more money, took the chief interest, and also bought the printing plant, Stedman taking the second part, and assuming the responsibilities of its editing and publishing. In February, 1853, a mutual partnership of the *Tribune* Job Printing Office was formed, and thereafter the paper was published by them jointly.

Later, Stedman elsewhere said: "My first experience was as a master printer. I don't pretend I ever was an apprentice or a journeyman. I started as a master printer. I edited a country paper and we had a job-printing office, and we had a 'devil,' and after two or three weeks I discovered that this Mephistopheles was putting on airs. He understood correcting proof better than I did. I made up my mind that would not do, and for six or eight months I worked learning to stick type, until I could give points to this 'devil,' who may have been Sam Clemens disguised."

Platt and Stedman retained the original office in Coit's Block, at the corner of Main and Union Streets, and issued the paper on its accustomed Wednesday. "Our object," they proclaimed, "is not an ephemeral one. We design to spare neither pains nor expense to make this journal a *widely circulated and influential Political and Family newspaper*." While never forgetting "the inculcation of sound Whig principles," their intention was not to allow political matters to engross their columns to the exclusion of important news, and matters connected with Science and Literature. So far as they could make it so, the paper was to be *universal* in its scope.

A rush of boyish energy, and a "confident hope of success," seemed at once to pervade the paper. The following extract is from Stedman's Christmas greeting:

"A Merrie Christmas!"

To each and all of our patrons we shall mentally address these familiar words, as we awake on the morning of the day which—as the old ballad so gravely tells us—"comes but once a year."

And would, kind readers, that our friendly greeting, though it may come too late to enhance the joys of that festival, may not be too late to awaken a pleasant feeling in the hearts of those who hear it—a feeling that shall reciprocate the wish that we could have seen you all face to face, and, with a good old Saxon grip of the hand, and a knowing wink of the eye, have shouted in your ears—"We wish you a merrie Christmas!"

As we utter the magic words, what a crowd of associations rise to their bidding, like spirits of the Past! What dreams of the olden time and the rude happiness of our forefathers in the ancestral land! What visions of the days of "Good Queen Bess," when they celebrated such worthy anniversaries with roisterous vigor;—of long, bracketed banquet-halls where, around oaken tables, sat the grim Barons and their stalwart retainers,—drinking the Norseland ale that foamed full and flowing from the lips of the ponderous tankards, and feasting right heartily, with jests and with carols, on the "Rounde Beefe of Old Englande." What saith the Poet?

> "There was once a world, and a brave old world,
> Away in the olden time!
> And the men were brave, and the women fair
> When the world was in its prime.
> The Priest, he had his book,—
> And the Scholar, he had his gown,—
> And the old Knight stout, he walked about,
> With his broadsword hanging down."

It was in this "brave old world" that Christmas received its fullest share of honors and ceremonies. Then, for a fortnight before and after the day itself, that jocular personage, y'clept the "Lord of Misrule," reigned supreme, and, followed by his troop of mummers and masqueraders, put in practice all the arts he knew to make merry the simple hearts of the honest English yeomanry. Among his train came Father Christmas himself—old and hoary,—Baron Plum Pudding and Justice Roast Beef, shaking their fat sides—all full of revelry, mirth and frolic. The very name of the anniversary, (*Yule*, in Saxon parlance,) is derived from *giul*, the name by which the Feast of Thor at this time of the year was known to the Saxons, who so called it from *iol*, or *ol*, signifying *ale*,—typical enough of the ideas which our ancestors connected with its observance! Then the great Yule log was brought into the hall, by hosts of dependants bearing torches, and its warm glow lit up the scene for all a winter's night. Then, too,

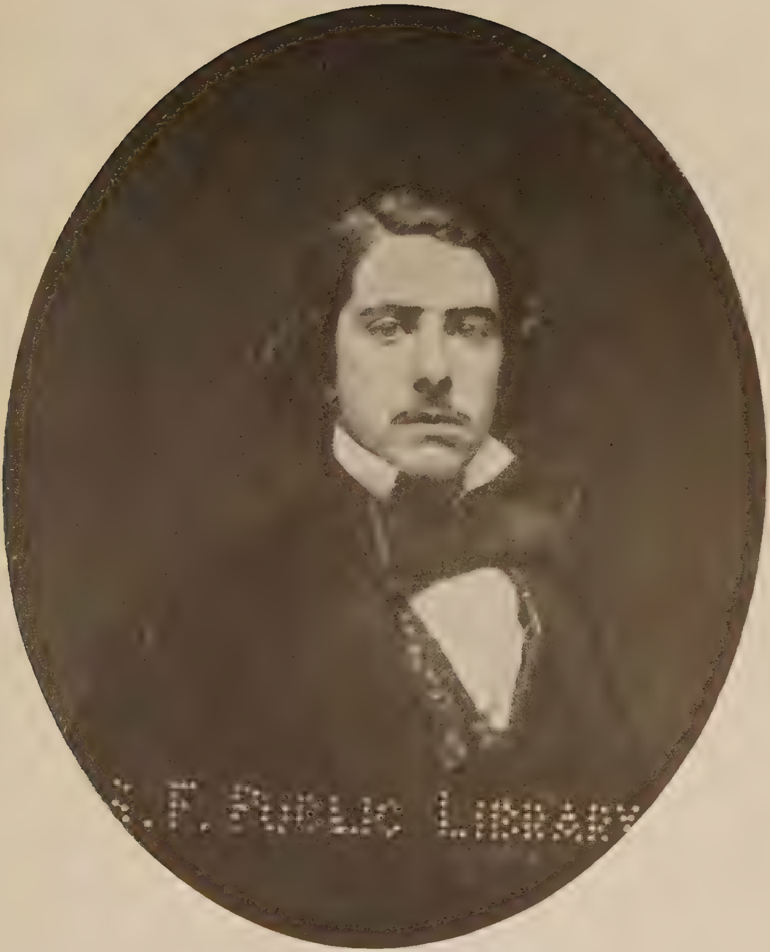
> "—— the grim boar's head frowned on high,
> "Crested with bays and rosemary."

Then the minstrels wandered from village to village, singing carols and waving boughs of holly in the frosty air;—the mistletoe hung in the hall, and many a happy couple passed beneath it; the wassail bowl went from door to door, escorted by beautiful damsels, who sang "with dulcet voices," songs composed for the occasion;—all, from the peasant to the prince, saluted each other with presents and good wishes.

In January, 1853, Stedman gave to his paper a column of solemn prose, "Death necessary to the Harmony of Nature," with thoughts on Immortality. Next, he wrote some letters to the Editor, signed *Athos*, on "Norwich as it is, and should be," considering such subjects as the need of a new Hotel; on the Credit System; Toll Bridges and Toll Gates. Later, he expanded in an editorial critique, occupying four columns, on "Norwich: a Poem," by James F. Forsyth, which suggested Stedman's own poem "The Inland City," that appeared the following month. He originated an *Editor's Miscellany*, a chatty column of general news and interests, writing also many editorials, sometimes political, civic, national; or, again, on Nature, enlivening his work with quotations from his wide reading. There were scattered book reviews,—and the young editor was quick to encourage an author, whose work he felt to be commendable. He took also a deep interest in bringing out talent in his friends, when advisable, inducing them to contribute to his sheet: "Isaac H. Bromley's first writing was for me on the little *Norwich Tribune*. What scapegraces we were, together, by night and day."

Referring to such happy comradeship, James L. Spaulding, once a printer in Norwich, says: "It was our pleasant duty to 'escort' Stedman from the 'Landing' to his home in Norwich Town every evening, and scenes and discussions 'from gay to grave, from lively to severe,' that took place on the way are yet vividly impressed on my memory. On our return trip Bromley was so apprehensive that absence of the genial 'Ned' from the company would result in excessive depression of spirits that he spared no efforts to prevent our falling into that state."

On many a winter evening, when the snow, like frosting on a cake, covered the ground, "the genial Ned" was foremost in some frolic. He may have remembered his own



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STEDMAN AT THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN
From a daguerreotype by Case

jolly country sleighing when, a decade later, he wrote his new song to an old tune:

In January, when down the dairy
  The cream and clabber freeze,
When snow-drifts cover the fences over,
  We farmers take our ease.
At night we rig the team,
  And bring the cutter out;
Then fill it, fill it, fill it, fill it,
  And heap the furs about.

. . . .

Through bridge and gateway we 're shooting straightway,
  Their tollman was too slow!
He 'll listen after our song and laughter
  As over the hill we go.
The girls cry, "Fie! for shame!"
  Their cheeks and lips are red,
And so, with kisses, kisses, kisses,
  They take the toll instead.

. . . .

Last couple toward the left! all forward!
  Cotillons through, let 's wheel:
First tune the fiddle, then down the middle
  In old Virginia Reel.
Play Money Musk to close,
  Then take the "long chassé,"
While in to supper, supper, supper,
  The landlord leads the way.

. . . .

So follow, follow, by hill and hollow,
  And swiftly homeward glide.
What midnight splendor! how warm and tender
  The maiden by your side!
The sleighs drop far apart,
  Her words are soft and low;
Now, if you love her, love her, love her,
  'T is safe to tell her so.

But it needed capital, as well as zest and ability, to make a paper pay in a small town, where there were already two weeklies. The job-printing business yielded a good net income, but in order to maintain their paper properly, the entire proceeds had to be sacrificed to its needs. Therefore, in July, 1853, Stedman sold out his interest in the concern to his partner, and on the sixth of the month the partners published a genial valedictory, adding that they had arranged that any subscriber who had paid in advance, should receive any Norwich paper which he might prefer, or if that was not satisfactory, his money would be refunded. On the 9th of July, the *Norwich Courier* issued an attack on the *Tribune* saying that since its inception it had been in debt, "but for the young gentleman who has had charge of the editorial department of the paper during the last six months we have none but kind wishes," adding that they hoped he would devote his dearly bought wisdom to some useful calling. The next Wednesday the town was surprised by a posthumous edition of the *Tribune*, of one sheet, bearing on the first page, instead of the usual date of publication, the words in large letters, "I Still Live." The article by the *Courier* was reprinted, and a vigorous and valiant retort was made by Stedman denouncing the attack, and defending his paper.

Fifty-three years later, at the Annual Meeting of the Norwich Board of Trade, their guest of honor, Edmund C. Stedman, recalling his early experience as editor of the *Norwich Tribune*, said:

> I really think my brief years of life at the Landing belonged to an unusual epoch—a transition period. Our paper, the *Tribune*, was a Whig sheet, but four years later my first vote was cast for Fremont, for I had seen a great light. During my editorship, Webster and Clay and Wellington died; Kossuth made his pilgrimage to this country; the last Whig-Democrat contest—that of Scott and Pierce—was waged. In Norwich the Benedict Arnold house was torn down; the Otis Library was built and endowed; the Wauregan House was erected by a syndicate of enterprising

citizens, whose returns were restricted wholly—as it proved—to a consciousness of having served the city. The Free Academy had not yet come. The Civil War, though no one dreamed of it, was in the near future. Norwich had three newspapers—or four—if you counted Mr. Cooley's temperance weekly. John W. Stedman—not my kinsman—quietly conducted the Democratic *Aurora*, was a good citizen and editor, and made it pay. The *Courier*, progenitor of the *Bulletin*, was run by the Reverend Mr. Sykes, and rather ably, but at a financial loss. Its editor had no use for poets, and was addicted to personal conflicts with Mr. Forsyth, a printer in the *Aurora* office, who wrote and published in book form a picturesque poem on Norwich. The little volume must now be rare. Mr. Sykes had still less use for young rivals, suspected of dipping into verse, like Mr. Charles B. Platt and myself, who ran the *Tribune* as long as our reserves enabled us to content ourselves with taking pay in trade from advertisers. Mr. Isaac H. Bromley, my classmate, haunted the office—we having been given permanent leave of absence from Yale. He much admired the valorous opening of my *Tribune* prospectus: "Our object is not an ephemeral one." I never have estimated the good bestowed upon Norwich by our incumbency; but I know that our office was the training-school of both Bromley and myself in the profession to which I have always been at least semi-attached, and of which he was so brilliant a luminary until the year when he came back, like a wounded stag, to die where his course began. How different now the newspaper guild of Norwich, with able business methods, a large constituency, progress in the air, and full recognition of the importance of local news and opinion for local journalism! This city has every reason to be proud of its press and may it loyally sustain it.

There was an important reason why Stedman felt the necessity of applying his energy to some work, which would bring him money as well as esteem. In the printing office of the *Tribune* was a young man, Horace Woodworth, whose sister, a slender, petite, daintily rounded, young girl, with black hair, large hazel eyes, and an unusually fine complexion, used to trip modestly in and out to speak with her brother. Her attractive, sweet expression, and her glowing beauty, caught the alert eye of the chief editor. And Mr. Platt was equally awake to her charms. In a short time the partners discovered that each was in love with the little maiden. It was a delicate and solemn situation demanding the finest honor. The following letter, composed and written by Stedman, was sent to "Miss Woody," as she was called by her many admirers:

Wednesday—P. M.

Miss Woodworth,

You will of course be much surprised, and perhaps disturbed, when you have received and read this letter. We hope you will not be offended—we hope you will not imagine for a moment that we are trifling, but that you will treat the matter, on which we address you, in sober earnest,—feeling that nothing can lie more near and dear to *our* hearts.

To explain this singular mode of addressing you, it is proper that we should tell you that we are *true and devoted friends*, and are well known as such; that we value that friendship, and desire each other's happiness; that we trust we are neither of us destitute of feeling and principle, and that we confide implicitly in each other's *honor*. Such being the case, we are forced into the step we take.

For, during your stay in Norwich, some fate has ordered that we should *both* become interested in yourself. Each of us has found out that your love is more to him than all the rest of the world's enjoyments. Such a state could not exist very long, between two room-mates and friends, without a mutual discovery of each other's sentiments, and, though we were, and are, true friends, has already and *naturally* bred an unhappy feeling between us. Each of us loves you, each knows that the other does the same, —friendship and honor are apt to be forgotten when the heart is in question, and from what has passed already, we are still sane enough and calm enough, to dread what may come to pass in the future, when the passions of two men are thoroughly aroused, and they feel that they are both striving for the same dear object.

What can we do? We think that you know us both pretty well, and we have confidence that your clear-headed instinct will tell you whether you can love *either of us*, and if so, *which one* you can best sympathize with and cling to through life. It may be presumptuous in us to address you at all—it may be that you are happier as you are. But we cannot live much longer as we are now doing, and though we both dread to take this course, each fearing to lose all, it is better for each to *know his* destiny. We have therefore determined to act honorably to you and to each other, no matter what may happen, and then, if one is chosen by you, the other will still love his fortunate friend—do all in his power to add to his and your enjoyment, and will bear his loss as well as he can.

May we ask you to put an end to our suspense as soon as possible? Do it, if you will, by writing a single word to the *one you choose*—No, do it by returning the letter of the one *not chosen*, to him. This will preclude all embarassment on your part. It may be that you can return the love of neither; if so, do not misjudge our action, believe us *sincere*, and believe that we shall each be prepared to meet your decision.

We have individually plead our causes in the enclosed notes. Mr. Stedman is engaged to go with you to the Hippodrome to-morrow evening. Can you answer by that time? If you cannot, please make sickness an excuse for not going to the Hippodrome, as we have mutually agreed not to see you till we learn our several fates. Were there ever two such lovers, who yet were friends, as those who now sign themselves

EDMUND C. STEDMAN
and
CHARLES B. PLATT

Miss LAURA WOODWORTH.

(On the reverse of the above letter is written—
"*Please read this first.*")

And this is the letter which the little maiden did not return:

Dear LAURA,

I cannot refrain from once calling you *dear*, when I think that it may be the last and only time I shall be allowed to do so. You have read the joint letter of Mr. Platt and myself. It remains for me to say a word to you.

And if, in that word I had the power to throw the most tender affection and love,—love that has grown upon me every day since my life has been cheered by your presence, if I could breathe into that word a willingness to devote a lifetime to your happiness, and to cling to you and shelter you through all joy and sorrow, I should do no more than reveal to you the earnest passion which is beating at my heart.

And yet I fear that I have but little hope. You can hardly know me—you know but little of my past life or future prospects. And Mr. Platt loves you too. He is truly a fine man, and will always be kind and tender to you. I feel his worth, and fear that my chance is small for your favor. But, dear Laura, if you can love me for myself and for my love for you, I offer you my whole heart and hand. And if fervent attachment, and a sincere pride in the possession of you, can make you happy, I pledge them to you. You know that I am ambitious—let me be ambitious *for you*—I need some dear one for whom to strive, and at whose feet I can lay all the laurels that I may win. My dear Mother, who is as young in heart as ever, will welcome you with all a mother's affection for one who loves her son.

I almost dread to send this—fearing it may be returned. I wanted to have you know me longer and better, but it is necessary, as you will readily understand, for me to speak at once. There are many things I would like to tell you, in relation to the future and to our mutual lives, were I so presuming as to be sanguine of success. As it is, I can only say again—dear Laura, can you love me? In any case I shall ever be

Your most devoted friend
Edmund C. Stedman.

Miss Laura Woodworth.

Miss Woodworth was born at Franklin, Connecticut. Her father, a dyer of that town, was named Asa, after his grandfather, who had been a magistrate of Bozrah, Connecticut. Her mother was a gentle, admirable woman, Elizabeth Rogers. Laura Hyde was the sixth of fourteen children. As a young man, her father was very successful, but new inventions in machinery ruined his business, his means were rapidly reduced, he became discouraged, and his children sought occupation to help the family purse. His daughter Laura went from Danielsonville, where her parents were then living, to board in Norwich, and to learn the trade of millinery, as she had a natural taste for the artistic.

Mrs. Woodworth considered her daughter and Stedman too young to marry, and her knowledge of the proud influential Stedman family in Norwich, who she thought cared more for power of position than for humble nobility, made her fear that the marriage would not be a wise one, and she very reluctantly gave her consent. For no mother could long resist the ardent love that the young man felt for her daughter, which burns in his letters, tied lovingly by his sweetheart, with a ribbon long since faded.

The lover was watchful of every opportunity for work. On August 16, he writes: "I am at present working as business editor in the *Examiner* office, on a salary, and under the patronage of all the ministers, temperance, and religious men, in Norwich. So you see I have found something to do. They want me to stay and will probably give me something handsome if I do. I have not made up my mind yet. I want to, and shall, till I find something better. . . . I walk down in the morning, take my dinner with me, and come up in the P. M."

His initial piece of work as a reporter was a "long hand" account for the *Examiner* on September 6, 1853, of the Groton Heights Anniversary, and of Governor Winthrop's Oration at Groton.

After several weeks his health became worse, and the doctor ordered him to travel. "I have engaged to go as commission agent for Mr. Cooley (of the *Examiner*) to introduce a new patent, and to make sales of type throughout the Northern states. Such an occupation just suits my health and happiness. You know how I always liked travelling, and I am confident that a winter spent in this way will make a strong fellow of me. I am tired—*tired*—TIRED of an editor's office, and particularly and eternally of that *dry Examiner*."

It was Stedman's pride to take his fiancée "fair as a lily of the valley" buggy-riding. "I used to dress up," he would recall with his merriness, "in a fancy blue waistcoat and flowing black cravat, and drive fast all around town." One can conjure the picture of the youth, with his thin, patrician face, illumined by his brilliant, magnetic eyes, his dark hair, brushed carelessly back, falling well below the deep collar, in "student fashion." And, at his side, the charming girl all smiles and radiant blushes. "The bearing of the youth of twenty was exactly that of the man of seventy-four," writes a friend, "ceaselessly alert, keenly observant, with the same uplift of the head when conversing."

"We will get married, Lurely," the young man promised, "when I am twenty-one, and go to sunny Italy for a wedding tour. Can you tell me, Lurely, about how much it will cost you to dress *well*, by the year?"

The lovers were not to wait so many long months. At ten o'clock on the morning of November 3, 1853, they were quietly married by the Reverend William H. Studley in the Episcopal Church at Yantic, a town on the outskirts of Norwich. In a dignified letter to his guardian, written on the wedding day, Stedman explains that whereas there was no person in the world, except his mother, whom he would so have wished to see at his wedding as his guardian and friend, "I was forced to keep it secret from you until it was all over, for I knew that you—however much you might desire such a consummation, in the capacity of friend—would yet feel obliged to object to it in the capacity of guardian."

After a happy honeymoon visiting friends and relatives in Boston, New York, and elsewhere, the couple returned to Norwich to board at Mrs. Hake's, on Main Street, occupied, in 1910, by the Arcanum Club.

Answering a solicitious letter from his mother, received in 1857, which aroused Mr. Stedman, he tells his own story of this period:

> We have now been married three years and a half—at the date of our union I was but twenty years old, and even more of a boy

than I am now! . . . She had few friends and I had none and wanted one true one; so I liked to visit her. Then my partner was in love with her and there was just enough rivalry about it to make me determine to supplant him. Then again the important world of Norwich said I never would marry her, but visited her for other purposes. This made me—who knew how gentle and good she was, and how nobly she was toiling . . . —this made me mad, and I determined to disappoint them—to marry her, and make them receive her as deferentially as if she had been crowned with diamonds. So I pledged her my love and troth, and after we had been married a few months I began to see that what I had done partly from caprice—partly from sympathy—partly from rivalry—most of all from pride—was a *good* thing for myself; that I had secured a true, loving heart and a nature as quiet and unostentatious, as it was devoted, for my own. I began to love her, and have loved her more and more ever since. She is one of those rare women who are by nature "gentle folk"—and stepped so easily from the chair of a sewing-girl to the sofa of the lady, that people saw she was *noble by birth* and accepted her accordingly. It was a trying change for Laura, but she stood the trial; and it is enough for me to say that in the busy, parvenu, malicious little aristocracy of Norwich, who had not been even aware of her noiseless existence a few months previous, she was not only welcomed as my wife, but became a favorite herself—for her own sake.

Until within a week of our marriage, neither of us had any idea of its transpiring for a year or two. But once having decided on the event, I had pride enough to prevent her from living as she had done. I was then struggling along with my first newspaper enterprise—the *Norwich Tribune*, and had little income, but at once removed her to the house of a friend of mine, where she was to board and study, etc., until arrangements could be made for her attendance at a regular Seminary. For six months this went on, and I had a hard time of it—she, poor girl, never knew but I was rolling in gold and perfectly independent. Uncle was getting very old—would not allow me a cent, as I had over-drawn my income somehow at College, nor would he allow me to leave Norwich (tho' I had good offers) and earn my own living as other men did. (This was after I left the *Tribune*.) He was afraid, if I went off, I should be an additional expense, he would have to make advances which I might take it into my head not to pay, on coming of age. At length I was positively unable to support Laura. As for myself, Uncle wished me to board in his family and do nothing for one year—until his responsibility was over. If I would study Law he would do anything. It became a question whether I should settle down ignobly and waste my time, while the girl of my choice earned her living by her needle, or whether we should get married, and thus force Uncle James to reconcile himself to my right to be at work, and to the fact that if I was to be supported and assisted—*my wife* had equal rights. Your own pride will tell you that I took the natural course—I never could allow my affianced to resume the situation I had taken her from. We were married—for three months lived on scanty advances doled out by Uncle James who yielded, as I foresaw, to the necessity of the case. Then I could stand it no longer, but "cleared out" to a distant place, where with one acquaintance, and $25. in my pocket, I *at once* succeeded, and was able to support a wife handsomely, and send some money back to Uncle James—before I became of age.

I think Laura has all the education of manners which girls brought up luxuriously possess. I know she has more tact and *intuitive* knowledge than one woman in ten. This latter quality renders her conscious that she does not possess those literary, scientific and scribbletary accomplishments that superficially adorn most ladies. She feels this keenly, and recognizing your superiority in correspondence etc., is too sensitive to write you—in fact, to write anyone—preferring you should see her face to face and love her for her *Nature* and not for her *Art*. You will understand all this, I know, dear Mother, from your "finer female sense," and will appreciate the fact that I have dared to shock your taste, by telling you the truth, rather than to let things go on, and run the risk of having you misjudge her character. I have no fears for the result, if you ever meet her.

I always went on the theory that I had enough literary education for the family—that I needed in a wife a resting-place, where I could be *nursed*, *comforted* and *loved*. Laura has been all this—and, like the wife of Schiller, understands me, if she does not my books.

CHAPTER V

THE YOUNG EDITOR

1854–1855

In June 1853, while Stedman was editing the *Norwich Tribune*, a weekly newspaper, the *Mountain County Herald*, published at Winsted, Connecticut, was received at his office. The journal attracted him, especially because its editor was a man who appreciated Tennyson and the Elizabethan Dramatists. This eventually led Stedman to enter into a partnership on February 25, 1854, with Stephen A. Hubbard of Winsted, buying out the interest of T. M. Clarke, the owner and proprietor of the *Mountain County Herald*, who had been called to Bridgeport to edit a weekly gazette in that town.

Stedman and his wife, each barely twenty years old, were soon afterward established in a roomy cottage on Center Street, in the pretty town of Winsted, housekeeping with "loyal, manly, modest Stephen Hubbard" and his attractive sister. To lighten further the expenses, they took members of the office force, and some friends, to board. Stedman is remembered as "cheerful and gay." "I feared his spirit would wear out his body, though I loved to hear him talk," said one of the group, on meeting the mother of Stedman in Italy the following summer. This happy arrangement on Center Street continued for nearly a year, when Stedman and his girl-wife went to live with Dr. and Mrs. Lyman Case, partly because Stedman believed a change to higher ground would be beneficial, but more through affection for the older people, who were like parents to the young pilgrims.

In an affectionate letter to his guardian in August, 1854, Stedman writes:

> It is now nearly six months since we came here, and they have passed quickly and not unpleasantly. As you are aware, we commenced house-keeping last April. Our family is large—at least ten persons all the time. This is not large for you, but it is for Winsted. Every room in our house is now full. We have three strapping boys, whose board costs more than the whole family beside, and your own experience will tell you that they give enough trouble. But we get along pleasantly with them and make them "toe the mark." One of them was surprised to learn yesterday that I was only two years older than himself. There are four heads to our family, Mr. Hubbard and his younger sister, a fine girl, and Laura and myself. What is remarkable, the ladies do not quarrel; so that of course we all four agree, for, nine times out of ten, if brothers, partners, or near friends quarrel, women are at the bottom of it. We hold from day to day, a five minutes' council of Four, and decide the grave question of what we will have for dinner, etc. Laura is an excellent house keeper, . . . and though she is sick a great deal, she keeps an eye out, and makes things go on in ship-shape. Of course we have had the usual vexations about good "Help," Cooking, Washing, etc., etc., but for some reason or another we have had no housekeeping troubles worth mentioning, and I have been surprised to see how much easier and smoother everything goes on, than I had anticipated from the stories of *old settlers*. We have a good garden, and made it ourselves, and have now plenty of *garden sass*, which I like much better than poor meat.
>
> As I have told you, our housekeeping is a partnership concern, the "House" account is kept on our books and we all earn our own living. We have succeeded this Summer in paying for our furniture, for a new Press we have paid $200. and owe as much more on it, have laid in a stock of stationery, and have some money on hand, besides $700. owing us on our books. None of our notes given in payment of our office have as yet come due. They will be met when they do. We now value our office, additions included, at $2500. When we bought it, we paid $1350. I think I have been pretty fortunate. For I *own* $200. worth of furniture, half of a new Press, and some $400. in money and cash claims for work

since we have been in partnership. Besides, I am supporting my wife and myself handsomely, and have incurred no debts in so doing. I may have to advance a few hundred dollars next Winter, when our heaviest payments are due, but all I advance will be secured to me, on the *most lucrative* printing office, out of Hartford and New Haven. . . . Is not this better, Uncle, than spending $60. a month, and doing nothing in Norwich?—Our expenses and payments have doubled within the last three months, but our receipts have done the same, and I have awoke, as it were, and found myself in control of a large and driving business, without much extraordinary effort to get there, and certainly with no pecuniary aid. And as I am yet very young, I hope with prudence and energy to make my "pile."

Dr. Case has deeded me one of the prettiest lots in town, up on the hill, and has taken my private note for it, besides giving me a *half-acre* extra because "he liked me," and one of these days I shall build a house, as every young man here does and live where we can get pure mountain air. Then I am sanguine Laura's health will improve, and till then we have resolved to exercise care and do as well as we can. Dr. Case is an old gentleman—about your age—rich, and he and his fine wife are the best friends we have made here.

Another of our troubles is my own health or rather want of it. I have had but one day of *sickness* since I have been here but have not been *well* any of the time, nor have I had a *single* holiday. It is *work*, *work*, early and late, and the hardest kind of work. I never was fat, but I have lost nine lbs. since March and am very weak in my lungs and side. I had agreed to take three weeks this September and go west to Minnesota with Judge Hitchcock, and have looked forward to it for two months as a recruiting spell from my labors. Judge H. was Clerk of the House last year, and is our Probate Judge, and we have formed quite an intimacy. But yesterday I sorrowfully made up my mind to back out, and give up the pleasant trip I have been anticipating, on which I was to have written letters home for my paper, and thrown business cares to the winds. The truth is, I cannot get away. Mr. Hubbard has over-worked himself, and had a run of bilious fever, and must go off some weeks himself. Even then I should go in September, would our business permit; but alas! it will demand every second of my time in that month, so much to pay, so much to collect, so much of everything. I shall be able to go, and it is agreed, that I shall go two weeks in early October to settle up my affairs in *Hartford* and *Norwich*, and if the Trustees have things in good order I hope to recruit a little then, I can't stand working at this rate much longer. . . .

If we have an "Old Folks' Concert" in the Fall, I am determined you shall make us a visit, hear the concert, and see the town. *You would find it very pleasant*, and you need not be gone but two or three days. On this theme I will write again. I would like to tell you of some of my friends here. They are most all old people. John Boyd, (for years a Free Soil candidate), Mr. Hurlbut of Winchester, Bank-President Dudley, for whom Grandfather Stedman was Godfather, and who is profuse in his kindness to me, etc., but I have overwritten myself, and must stop.

The great fault with Winsted people is that they don't know anything but *money* and *financiering*. There is not a man in town, under fifty years of age, well educated in any other than a business line. They know how to make money though. I am sometimes down with the blues, for want of *someone to talk to*, there is no companion here. However, I remember that Moses went into the wilderness for forty years before he went out into the world—and take courage. And then, when one has a dear wife there is always *one* intimate friend, and he need never be lonely long.

Mr Warren G. Crane, who worked as a thirteen year old errand-boy in "Squire's Store," over which the *Mountain County Herald* was published, tells us that Mr. Stedman used to come regularly into the store to chat. "He was always cheerful, interested in everybody, popular, and very energetic. He was invariably well-dressed—I never saw him in shirt-sleeves even in his office. He was one of the big men in Winsted, even if he was only a youth." He was the "youngest editor in the State," writes another. The Memorial History of Hartford referring to Mr. Hubbard says that he and Mr. Stedman took the "small country journal and made it one of the best known Connecticut papers."

"The politics of the paper were Whig, but its manager

BUILDING AT WINSTED, CONNECTICUT, WHERE STEDMAN EDITED
"THE MOUNTAIN COUNTY HERALD"

From a daguerreotype, by Landon, in the collection of Warren C. Crane

belonged to the coming race of journalists, and did not understand conservatism to imply the defense of wrong. The spirit and ingenuity with which Stedman conducted his journal, and the novelty of the correct literary tone which he took pains to impart to it, earned him a high reputation through the State," wrote Mr. Macdonough, in his article in the old *Scribner's*, in 1873.

The "make-up" of the *Herald* bore a similarity to that of the *Tribune*. The trend of mind, dominated by a spirit of "universalism," in the youth of eighteen crystalized in the man of twenty. Stedman invented means, and grasped every opportunity for the betterment of his journal. While giving selections from the standard authors, names of his young countrymen appeared, such as R. H. Stoddard and Bayard Taylor "to whom," says Stedman, "I looked up in my youth." Again he was happy in stirring the ability in his friends into action, brightening his columns with their fresh ideas. An executive business instinct, devising ways for adding to the money-drawer, was clearly evinced. All kinds of Fine Stationery were to be obtained at the office of Hubbard and Stedman,—later Plain and Fancy Job Printing was undertaken. A bait used nowadays, he then employed, offering his subscribers, in addition to the *Herald*, any popular magazine, asking only fifty cents more than the price of the magazine.

Brought up to believe that on coming of age October 8th, 1854, he would be rich by the will of his grandfather Stedman, it was a tragic disappointment to find the situation totally changed by the provisions of a new will, which unfortunately was not contested. An additional small amount, which Stedman had inherited from his father's brother Thomas, helped him to refund scrupulously "to the uttermost farthing" all advances which others had made to him in the past years; it also enabled him satisfactorily to adjust his business affairs. The balance he invested, with shrewd judgment, in stocks, and in the Winsted Coffee and Spice Company, with which firm he was connected for some months.

The long hours of work, and their responsibilities, the struggle, spurred by his pride, to meet well his expenses, and to make his wife "a little queen," wore down the strength of the young husband; and he began to feel the necessity of a change from his barren routine. Also, a subtle hunger, born of his brief, ardent glimpses of the faraway metropolis, crushed for a time, now stealthily asserted itself. He felt a longing to know the big city, to satisfy a craving for the opera and the theatre; and a voice faint at first, was now becoming strong and imperative—the desire and the necessity of testing, in the literary arena of New York, powers which he believed he possessed, but which required exercise for their proper expression.

"If you will take the trouble," Stedman wrote to his cousin Annie Stedman in Norwich, "to borrow *Putnam's* Magazine for October, [1854], you will find a 'pome' entitled *Amavi*, from the pen of the subscriber. It is no great scratch, was written two years ago, I revised it and sent it on as a 'feeler.' Two months more and I will show you something—worth reading. I feel flattered that it appears, however, as they reject about a bushel of effusions every month, and mine must have some merit to have gotten in. Always said, and still say, I won't publish, except in the No. 1 mediums.

"*Amavi*,[1] as your fine sense will tell you, is meritorious rather for the *chastity of its finish*, the absence of all expletives, and the force of passion crowded into a few lines, than for anything else. Quite a picture, too. Would send you a copy of *Putnam's* if I had one."

On April 14, 1855, the copartnership between Stephen A. Hubbard and Edmund C. Stedman was dissolved by mutual consent, Mr. Stedman's predecessor Mr. T. M. Clarke becoming his successor. It was a fine satisfaction to

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[1] "The first contribution to a magazine for which I received a check was a 'poem' called *Amavi*, written in my 20th year. I was a country youth and did not realize that magazines had to be 'made up' long before their publication. So I was surprised when the green-covered Monthly finally printed the poem, and the X which soon after reached me at Winsted seemed large enough to buy out the town."

Stedman to feel that he had gallantly lead the *Herald* over its second year—"that most dangerous period of newspaper life," and returned it to the founder in a state of increased vigor, more firmly established, and more lucrative.

July 1, 1855, under the name *Ingraham & Stedman*, Stedman formed a partnership in the manufacture and the sale of clocks, with E. A. Ingraham & Company, assuming charge of the branch store in New York, at No. 48 Cortlandt Street. The headquarters of the Company were in Bristol and Ansonia, Connecticut.

"Why did I leave off editing?" Stedman answered his mother: "Because, as I told you, there were five days of small business, and one day of editing. Editing a weekly journal successfully is a good deal of a business operation, after all, and I assure you I availed myself of all the good 'associations' it procured for me, and as it was, my paper was the literary standard of the State, *undoubtedly*. But I very soon sucked all that was beneficial out of the associations you alluded to, and when the orange was dry, what remained but to throw the skin away? I did *not* like the reputation of being 'E. C. Stedman, Esq. the talented young editor of the *Bungtown Gazette*'—a reputation fast spreading. The man who has the reputation of a *good second rate actor* can never touch the Audience like a 'Star' even if he plays *as well*. *Aut Cæsar—aut nihil.* And so I found that money-grabbing was the principal part of country editing, and not a moment's time for heavy writing. I thought I might as well be at something that would give me a little time to write for myself, study, etc., and so came to New York—to do *business* eight hours a day, I thought, instead of twelve, and have my evenings to cultivate higher 'literary associations' than editing a country paper never so well could procure for me."

CHAPTER VI

IN OLD NEW YORK

1855–1857

Edmund Clarence Stedman faced the world in New York City the Midsummer of 1855. He continued his business in Clocks until the ensuing Spring, when a factory stored with his wares burned. He then sold out to his partners, and became a Real Estate and General Commission Broker. Living in New York was an uncle, William Earl Dodge, the Senior, his mother's brother, an eminent merchant and religious philanthropist. A statue erected to the memory of Mr. Dodge, in Herald Square, in 1885, is well known to latter-day New Yorkers. Mr. Dodge, who was friendly to his proud and independent nephew, though disturbed that the young man was not orthodox in his faith, offered to assist him in obtaining the editorship of a paper in Scranton, Pennsylvania. The following letter was Mr. Stedman's reply:

New York, July 17, 1856.

I secured by three years exertion in Connecticut a *good character* for my paper and myself—both for talent and moral principle—and people knew that my paper would always take the right course on any subject, and support it ably. Few young men could have taken such testimonials with them, as I procured from our *best* men, when I went West—and such a character is "more precious than gold". . . .

While it is true that I have never made a profession of religion, and that if I were to do so at present it would be a sin of hypocrisy, it is also true that you would do many excellent people injustice if you made this step the test of their good morals. An honest position is a thing to be respected—not *sus*pected. In these days, and in our family, is it not more of a cross to abstain from, than to profess religion? I at least quietly do my duty, and am a decent fellow enough, generally. . . .

I have concluded to ask you not to write to Scranton for me,—if you have not yet done so,—for the following reasons. I have always been doing business for myself—never for *others*. Beginning young the continual anxiety of management and meeting my own notes, etc. has been far too much for my health and happiness. I have been able to do so all alone and it has worn on me more than ten years work, as a subordinate would have done. As you say, I am perhaps better fitted for a literary life than anything else. Yet five days of the week in a rural newspaper-office are devoted to *business*, and there is as much worry in meeting expenses as in doing a business of thousands of dollars. My paper *paid* because I was not only an editor, but a business man, and to make it pay, I worked all day, and thought all night, for I cannot go home, like many, and put all business out of my mind, by an effort of the will. I stood it as long as I could—have assumed the same cares since—and can stand it no longer. I am determined not to put myself in such a position again, until I am older, and not then unless under most advantageous circumstances. Am I not right?

I wish then, to work for somebody else, and so, Uncle if you wish to do me a kindness, now is the time, and this is the way. I am on the look-out for the berth of Corresponding Clerk, Bookkeeper, Assistant Cashier, or something of the kind, in a Mercantile or Banking House, with a salary sufficient to support me with economy (which I can get in no literary position) and where my duties are over when the day is done. My experience for once gives the lie to the idea that a man cannot love books and be a business man at the same time.—At any rate, I am a good bookkeeper, quick and careful, and have endeavored to acquire a knowledge of finance etc., and will try to fill creditably any such position as your influence may secure for me, and thank you heartily for it besides.

I shall then get fat—have no notes to meet—not have the fear of poverty before my eyes—enjoy myself when I am at home. And shall still, you may be sure, fairly earn my salary—wherever I may be employed.

You see what I need, Uncle, and my reasons—which latter you will appreciate, if you ever suffered what I have. Please bear my case in mind.

There was now an extra mouth to feed, for on April 22, 1856, a son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Stedman, whom they named Frederick Stuart. In June, partly for the sake of the child, and also for economic reasons, Stedman rented in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, a pretty, tasteful, two-story cottage, built in the grounds attached to the residence of its owner. Some dainty furniture was bought, and the rooms made attractive and homelike,—the young father taking a proud satisfaction in putting the best of everything in the guest room, selecting furniture painted in light green with pink roses, in vogue at that period. This was the first home of their very own. As Freddy was delicate, Stedman sent for his wife's ten year old sister, Electa B. Woodworth, to live with them as a companion for his wife, and to help her with the care of the little one. Another member of the household was a young lawyer, Adam C. Ellis, who, excepting relatives, was Mr. Stedman's first New York friend. Both young men were struggling against the financial tide, therefore they joined issues in a fraternal way, sharing an office at 115 Nassau Street, and Ellis came to board with the Stedmans. Beside the respective business of each, the young men concocted schemes for money-making, of which the most unique was the invention of a cosmetic, originated wholly by Stedman, and by him romantically called "The Rose Bloom of Cashmere." Mrs. E. B. Stone of Northampton, Massachusetts, who was the little Electa, or Ella, remembers that Stedman used to take her on his knees, testing the tint again and again on the little girl's pretty bare shoulders, until he had secured the desirable shade. Then Mrs. Stedman and Ella would wrap the cosmetic in small, neat packages, which Stedman carried to the Nassau Street office, where orders were received. The cosmetic is said to have been really very good, and considerable profit was made from its sale.

These days, tempered with discouragements and disappointments, and often ill-health, were notwithstanding very happy ones. The young father was overflowing with boyish vivacity, cheerfulness, and fun, interested in everything, and building many castles for the future. Every morning, before taking his early train to the city, he would go out into the kitchen, to ask Mrs. Stedman what had been planned for dinner, offering his own valuable suggestions. Then he would give the little Ella instructions as to the care of Freddy, telling her where to go for the daily baby-carriage outing, and how long to remain out-of-doors, "the father of twenty-three having the sense of responsibility and the good judgment of a wise *pater-familias* of twice his age." He showed a brotherly care and affection for Ella, studying her welfare, and was careful to see that she went to school. He took pains also to carry out the wishes of Mrs. Woodworth that her daughter should attend Church and Sunday School and fulfill other religious duties, and if the little girl failed in any of these, he would remonstrate: "Do you think your good mother would approve of this?"

After a hard day's work in the city, he would return in time for dinner, to enliven the family circle with town news, himself eager to hear what had transpired in the cottage, since he left it that morning. In the evening he would sit down at a desk in the living-room, and work at his poems. Sometimes, he would read his verses aloud, calling the small Ella to listen to them. "I remember," says Mrs. Stone, "his infinite loneliness for intellectual companionship; whereas Ellis was a jolly fellow, bubbling with great vitality, he had no comprehension of the intellectual and spiritual sensitiveness of Stedman. I remember the night Edmund wrote 'Heliotrope,' inspired by some heliotrope plants which his wife, who was devoted to flowers, had in a little wooden box. He called me to his side, and repeated the poem over and over, throwing his whole soul into the final lines,—

Oh, what did she whisper to you
My beautiful heliotrope.

'Oh, Ella, how does that sound?' The accuracy of the line 'her star-white neck divine' worried him. 'Ella,' he said, 'are n't the stars *white*?' I answered that they were iridescent—that they twinkled. Then he went to the window, gazing long at them, and striving to obtain the exact simile." The heliotrope was always a favorite flower with Mr. Stedman, its fragrance invariably stirring some far memory.

When he did not write, he read until a late hour, often poring over the poems or books of young aspirants like himself, taking a keen delight in their efforts, and incited and encouraged by them to make his own voice heard. Through their work, as when in Winsted, he became familiar with Stoddard, Winter, Aldrich, and with Bayard Taylor, whose success was more assured. And how he hungered to know and to talk with those brilliant young fellows! But, especially, he read the works of Tennyson. In a little worn and pencilled copy of the blue and gold Tennyson, a gift to his wife, was written on June 14, 1856: "To the dearest of women, I give the most precious of modern books."

There were occasional guests at the little cottage: Dr. Perkins, the family physician, would linger after his professional call, and sometimes the son of their kind friends Dr. and Mrs. Case of Winsted—Lyman Case, and his wife (now Mrs. Edward Howland) would pay the Stedmans a visit; more often during a short period when Mr. Case was associated in business with Stedman. Mr. Dodge also came, and his two visits were gratifying to his nephew. "He would question Edmund as to his prospects," writes the grown Ella, "how he was succeeding financially, and my child-heart admired the pride and pluck in Edmund's hopeful replies, concealing the real facts which I knew were *not* very hopeful." At the age of sixty-seven, he says: "If I could have had even $500. a year when young, I might have been a writer."

Several little dinners were given at the cottage, on which occasions the infectious gayety of the young father knew no restraint. He also delighted in banishing care by any simple enjoyment: "I recall," relates Mrs. Stone, "the Hallowe'en of 1856; Edmund was determined to celebrate the mystic night, in spite of the scoffing of the others who refused to join in any such nonsense. So Edmund and I had the fun all to ourselves. We melted lead, bobbed for apples, and tried all the uncanny tricks until finally he 'dared' me to go down all alone into the farthest corner of the dark cellar, to turn around three times, repeating as I turned,

'Raw head and bloody bones,
Come and eat me.'

First he offered me a dollar, then two dollars, when he finally raised the bribe to *three* dollars, I reluctantly started on the perilous 'stunt;' but when I had reached the last step of the cellar-stairs, he laughingly called me back. Laura and Ellis scolded him for tempting the sensitive child to such an adventure, which, he, of course, had no idea of allowing me to carry out, wishing only to test my courage."

In October, 1856, Stedman broke down in health. Working through the day, and watching at night his sick baby, who had developed a slight spinal curvature, together with his other anxieties, was more than his frail body could withstand. Toward the end of the year he contracted a severe cold, which forced him to remain at home, Ellis bringing out his mail every night, "which," says Stedman, "I answered as well as I could—doing just enough to keep my business from going to ruin. Between each letter I would lie down exhausted." Then pleurisy set in, and for several weeks Stedman was flat on his back, and feared that he was "somewhat along in consumption." His business had now begun to increase. "I saw it would kill me to drive it alone," he says, which led him on January 1, 1857, to take his cousin Samuel Milligan as a partner. "I was obliged to come over to New York to 'break him in,'" Stedman writes. "Of course I could not go and come so I put up at a hotel, and found the air of New York, night and day, agreed with me much better than changing from town to country continually, and I improved so fast in health and strength, that

I resolved to stay here till warm weather." Acting upon this decision, Stedman immediately closed his house in Elizabethtown, and removed his family to a boarding house at 36 East 20th Street, maintained by a Mr. and Mrs. Shephard. Another motive which impelled him to resume city quarters was that Freddy might have the best medical skill and care.

A little incident is connected with the stay at the Shephard boarding house was the acquaintance with Count Ivaschunko—a fine type of Russian nobleman, whose rooms adjoined those of the Stedmans. He first became attracted to the family on hearing Ella sing to the baby, as she rocked him to sleep. A story which Mr. Stedman delighted to tell, was this: "Pop goes the Weasel" was then a common street song, and sometimes Ella would vary her Sunday School repertoire with a bit of this nonsense to the joy of the baby. At the dinner table, one evening, the Count turned to the little girl, seated next to him, and said, "I hear you *seeng* a new song to-day, what *ees* it? Let me think—O it was—Pop goes *ze* monkey!" Of course the guests about the table shouted, and the Count's delight in the belief that he had found the right English for a word new to him, was extremely funny; but in the face of so much merriment he became abashed, and Stedman, repressing his own keen amusement, tactfully explained the error, relieving the Count's embarrassment, and giving a happy turn to the incident.

Another occurrence which strongly appealed to Stedman's sense of humor, was the Count's presentation of a huge hamper of choice champagne to the eleven year old Ella in token of his interest in and fondness for her. The incongruity of this gift to the small New England girl, who was also a thoroughly orthodox little Temperance advocate, convulsed Stedman.

Mrs. Stone recollects that the *many-sidedness* and versatility which Stedman evinced in his sympathy for all that interested any class of people was very marked: "Riding one day with him out into a country suburb, we noticed a farmer engaged in an awkward attempt to remove some obstinate tree stumps from a piece of ground. Edmund watched him a moment, then, throwing the reins to me, sprang from the buggy, cleared the stone wall with a bound, and, seizing the iron bar from the astonished farmer, skillfully adjusted it beneath the stump in an entirely different manner from that which had proved so unsuccessful; then, bidding the farmer take hold with him, the stump was soon removed. An animated conversation concerning best methods of farming in general followed, the farmer listening with attentive interest to ideas and suggestions entirely new to him, but practical and helpful."

Stedman's mother, who had not seen her boy since he was a lad of sixteen, was often disturbed both as to his spiritual and his physical welfare. In a letter to her on January 30, 1857, he begs her to love him, and especially for what he is. Continuing,—

> First, I have already intimated that *reproof* from you will not wound my feelings—I have undoubtedly my share of *amour propre*, but none that puts me on etiquette with *you*, who are privileged. Second, you satirize my "belief in my star." Perhaps I only meant by this to express a feeling of *self-dependence* produced by invariable success when acting on my own resources, and invariable failure, when adopting the *advice* of friends—for assistance, other than advice, has *never* been offered. Many times, in spite of my *amour propre*, had it been offered, I should have accepted it! Thus necessity has made *me* reserved, self-reliant etc., who am by nature the most enthusiastic, open-hearted and dependent of fellows. Dependent much, I mean, on the sympathy and appreciation of others—not to say their love. I can now get along decently without it, and if health will return, mean to try what I can do, and hope to succeed.
>
> Third, you animadvert rather severely on my business, and conjure up an unnecessary vision of resultant evils. Rest easy on this score; my business is as honest as anyone else's—it is of as much benefit to the community as any non-producing employment. My bitter delineation of my present life was simply an outburst of natural, inherited and, I think, generous contempt

for *any* trade, or non-productive *gobetweening*. To chaffer and dicker *does* belittle the man who gives his *soul*, as well as his body to the ignoble employment. I agree with you there! But if you think that "princely merchandizing" leads to generous impulses—expansive action etc.—I *don't*. The difference is one of quantity, not of quality. Merchandizing *inevitably* produces a desire for gain—"princely" merchandizing is only carried on successfully after long discipline in the ranks, and is an aggravated form of the disease. All the princely merchants of my acquaintance are princely snobs; if they do a decent act—if they build a temple "to Science and Art," like ———, or give royal international dinners, like ———, it is in the one case in order that "Science and Art" may groan under the weight of being *obliged* to speak well of a rich old nincompoop after he is rotten, and, in the other, that all the *little* English and American snobs may vie in fulsome laudation of the *great snob*—whose wine they drink! This may be severe, but it is just. *Justitia fiat—cœlum ruat!* The more I see of business—the more I despise it. It is everywhere diamond cut diamond—profit piled on profit—till at last the poor *consumer* pays twice what a thing is worth, and all to fatten the crowd of unnecessary middle men. Legitimate business of course is a desideratum, but it will never be known till the world is so thickly settled that the few *cannot* monopolize the natural inheritances of all human beings.

. . . .

Last, about neglecting my friends, etc. You are misinformed. I have cultivated them to what I consider a highly commendable extent. Our family *is* rather gossippy—and apt to load you down with kind words etc.—besides being prolific as a cony-burrow, but actions speak louder than words. And ——— *is* worldly-wise, and don't believe in giving "advice"—for two good reasons, first, if you succeed, you forget where you get your advice. Second, if you fail, you never forget it! So *he* likes to see a young man paddle his own canoe, and once or twice has *declined* pulling an oar with me—though I never asked him to do me a favor except that of a good word to some men whom I desired to buy of, etc. . . . I go often to Uncle Stuart's, he is a good, kind man and my true friend. Uncle William is a fine, earnest, enthusiastic man and knows more (by that I mean, *generalizes* more) than a man devoted to Copper, Temperance, and Dr. Smith's Church, can be expected to. I never asked him for a favor but he granted it, if reasonable, and if I wanted one of him to-morrow, no false pride would prevent my asking it. When I "refer" to him, he does not stand on business etiquette and decline giving the information he is possessed of. *He* is not a *snob*.

Further news may be spared concerning many relatives—news of which kind it is characteristically thoughtful of Stedman to give. Furthermore, he says:

I wish to mention one thing, to the exclusion of some others. "America's bright tragedienne" has at last appeared! Matilda Heron is the last wonder here—and she is a wonder! I have always been a theatre-goer—have never seen what I considered *acting*—have sat cold and careless under the ranting of Forrest and the terrible displays of Miss Cushman, etc.,—but I have at last seen that perfection of Art which is Nature itself. There is not a caviller—our most severe and studied critics (White of the *C and Enquirer*—Fry of the *Tribune*—the *Times* man etc.) join in extolling her as the greatest actress living. You know we have had them all here—except Ristori—and the Heron beats them all. She is American by education, Irish born—and a splendid woman. She played here several years ago in subordinate characters but made no impression—knowing she could do it with study, she went to Paris, studied two years and then came back. Played in the West and South, setting folks crazy, but has only just come to New York. It was with difficulty she could get a manager to engage her, but her first night decided her destiny. She plays "Camille"—her own translation—*wonderfully*. Don't know yet whether she can impersonate Shakespeare's characters, and don't *care*. She is the Queen of what I should call the pre-Raphaelite school of acting. Goes back to Nature—does not belong to the classic school—is not statuesque, like Rachel; she does not strive after that ideal which the Ancients did—a kind of nature *more* beautiful than the Actual—a type and foreshadowing of some higher sphere, but is perfect in delineation of *common love* and *grief*. The crowded audiences are swayed, and sob like children—she is not clap-trappy—it is true, noble Art! If she goes to Europe she will create a sensation. She is said to be even finer in *Medea* than *Camille*. We shall see! I think she cannot play it so well, from her very nature.

But I have written so long that I must close without even adverting to literary matters. Your book, my own poems, Lord's New Tragedy, Boker and Stoddard, etc.,—all these and more I will talk about in my next. . . . Give my warm love to the girls. When will they write me. I should be pleased to receive letters from them. I suppose they have some little beaux. It is really about time they had a smell of American air.

To the Same.

February 20, 1857.

. . . I have been endeavoring for a month or more to tear myself away from my business—and by a few week's cessation from this continual labor, and change of air, etc. to so improve my health as to be able to greet you heartily and wholesomely in June, when I hope and trust to see you here. My partner has now become so well acquainted with the office duties, that at last I am able to get away—tho' with some misgivings as to the result of my absence. But I have put my foot down—life and health are more important than all else—and just as this conclusion is arrived at—along comes a matter of business which one of us must go West at once to attend to. So I *gladly* seize the chance, and shall start Monday—worn-out and needing fresh air. I shall be gone three or four weeks and thereby escape the March winds—so aggravating to my cough which has not yet left me. . . . Miss Heron is not so good in *Medea* as in *Camille*. At least, she doesn't come up to my idea of *classic* acting. But she infinitely surpasses any other woman I know of on this side of the water. She shows her *Irish* blood in *Medea* and looks consequently very *Greek!* Yankee vulgate for *Hibernian*.

The "Powers Marbles" are here; what do you rate the sculptor at in Italy. Has that Miss Hosmer any genius? I should like to see Powers.

Are you writing a drama? What theme—how near finished? The next book you publish—put into my hands—and it shall be properly brought out, and at my own risk.

To the Same.

March 29, 1857.

My dearest Mother: I returned from the West on last Monday Eve—having been absent from N. Y. just four weeks. Tuesday morning I received by Steamer your double letter of Feb. 25th. It was over a month coming and Mr. Case, who chanced to be in the office, thought it a long time on the way. As it was, I should have seen it no sooner—had it arrived earlier, and it came just in time to welcome me "home again." I need not assure you, dear Mother, that I take a great amount of pleasure from the knowledge that I was enabled to send my letter to you in time to console you somewhat under the acute suffering of which your letters bear the traces—in time to relieve the sad conjectures which the one first penned contains. It was a happy coincidence—to say the least—and who shall say that the fond and beautiful idea which your fancy cherishes is not the instinctive perception of the truth? Not I, by any means! who am daily understanding more of the realities and capabilities of spirit—of the uncertainties and powerlessness of everything else. These kindly instincts of holy influences *are* true—else there were no religious faith. "After all is said and done, your rapt seer is your only logician." So let me join with you in the belief that the dear Angel who did so much for us on Earth is even now drawing us close and closer together in the folds of her "loving mantle." Ah, Mother!—she is nearer you now than when the ocean lay between you, for of all sweet spirits who have flown from Earth to Heaven, she was most fitted to at once assume the sacred duties of a "Ministering Angel"—and in such an existence alone could *she* find beatific joy.[1] . . .

Within a few years I have learned that love is better than fame. The latter is noble, but so little can be got in this world, and the soul's powers are so infinite—that what are they given to us for, unless for full development in other spheres? One who can be a "man among men" will be an angel among angels. Reputation is transient—Character and Love are eternal. If these are commonplaces, I am just beginning to understand them—and Love has taught them to me. Thus, in my humble way I try to be a Christian—after my own conception of the Christ. Yet reputation is worth all other *earthly* things to a son of my mother. . . . I am tied down—cannot leave for the West, *cannot*, even for my life, carry out your earnest proposition to sail for Italy—see you once again, and perhaps bring you home with me. How my heart leaps at the idea! But no—it is impossible—a hateful and decisive word. If you had only said so three years ago!—It would have altered the whole course of one life, at least. Dear Mother, I *cannot* come—and so let me say no more of myself, but speak of your situation—I have told you truthfully mine, as I promised you I always would.

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[1] Referring to the death of Mrs. Kinney's sister, Mary White.

I fully understand how sadly, one by one, the knells of death sound over the ocean to your ear. My heart bleeds for your lonliness and distress—if I had the wings of a dove, I would fly away to you and for a time would we not both be at rest?—The reasons—bitter and practical as they are—why I am forced to say "No" to your request, I need not trouble you with. You will believe me that they are sufficient, and I want the space for other matters.

After the letter you have written me, I shall not be understood as transgressing on Mr. Kinney's demesne in what I am going to say. [Stedman here suggests ways of making it possible for the return of Mr. and Mrs. Kinney to America, continuing:] I should say that $3500. in America would support a family consisting of a quiet, literary husband—a wife like yourself and two budding daughters, in a style considered here now by all well-bred people, much more genteel and elevated than the parvenu, gaudy display of our rich tallow chandlers. Within the last few years a reaction has taken place and decent people are tired of entering into the lists with your "Mrs. Potiphars" and Mrs. "Gauche Boosys." A quiet and tasty residence, and the society of a few select and kindred minds is now considered here as the *ne plus ultra* of refinement by all whose opinion is standard.

Mr. Kinney is perhaps aware of the wonderful political change which the Northern States have experienced during the last four years. The genius of Republicanism has taken hold of the people, and the movement under that name is no transient excitement, like that of "Know Nothingism," for, unlike the latter, it did not originate in political scheming, but was the slow, spontaneous growth of the free, educated North American mind. *All* the literary men of the North are Republicans; *seven-eighths* of the lawyers; *all* of the clergy; nearly all of other professions, and to speak briefly, nine out of every ten who constitute the reading public—that peculiar public on which Reviews and Magazines depend for support—that Public which has increased three-fold since Mr. K. left America. 175,000 families read the N. Y. *Weekly Tribune*—over 600,000 souls! The *Tribune* is *not* an interesting paper to any but an educated, thoughtful and earnest mind—and these minds are of late found in all classes of the people. Our very farmers are of late becoming, like the German mechanics, speculative and reformatory—not to say philosophical. Now, as I said before, these people have taken hold of Republicanism—very far removed from Abolitionism or any other fanatical movement, and the only Anti-slavery theory which seems to combine in proper relation the Radical and Conservative Antagonisms. These people understand themselves and their theory, and are not led by demagogues—they think in harmony but think for themselves, and are stronger than ever from their late defeat, in which, indeed, all thoughtful men see a moral victory! Now they have a newspaper—before-mentioned—which attends to the daily action and discipline of the Cause, but they have no *Review*—properly considered—to give them political *analysis* and general literary food. *Putnam's* is Republican, to be sure, in distinction from other journals, but does not fling out much of a banner, and is not "sustained" in its mental calibre—is alternately sensible and foolish, light and heavy.

Now there is a splendid chance for establishing a *Republican Review*—or, if you please, a *Republican Review and Æsthetic Magazine*—as it must combine the Philosophic, Literary and Æsthethic elements—yet depend on the Republican name and on one "heavy" Republican article quarterly for its success at introduction. Such a Review, properly edited and managed financially, would attain an unprecedented circulation and influence at this present "tide," and I should envy the position of its editor. Why, one "Appeal" in the columns of the *Tribune* for monetary aid, brought in $20,000. from as many different people. Somebody ere long will start this Review, you may be sure. Now it requires a man of eminent generalization—a first-class philosophic writer—a man of fine literary and æsthetic acumen—and a man of practical, energetic financial ability, (joined with publishing experience)—all these characters must be *united* in the projector of the *Republican Review.* He must also be acquainted with the prominent literary and philosophic men of the North, and possess the influence necessary to secure their good word for his enterprise—their articles for his Review and to make them adapt said articles to his own tone of mind and rules of management. Now we have philosophers who know everything but common-sense, writers who are popular and brilliant but cannot collect a subscription, business editors who can make an office *pay*, but have no tact in swaying the mind of readers—yet we have no one man who combines philosophic and literary powers with correct knowledge of the times, and possesses also financial, political and editorial *tact*—or if there be such a man he is and has long been located in some appropriate and successful position.

William B. Kinney—if he would wake up to the fact, and make, like Ulysses, a noble leap from the enchanted islands, is the only man for this place—and this place is the only one which, in America, would offer him a handsome support and elevated name, without the descent to petty detail and common-place chronicling, which a return to the editorship of a daily paper would entail. The latter of course he shrinks from. In the establishment and management of a philosophic and literary review, with the basis of Republicanism for its political character etc., he would find an occupation which would afford full scope for the utterance of his ripe thoughts,—congenial associations and society—a good income and a most dignified position generally. It would be *the* Review of the Country, and around its shrine the wise men of the West would delight to gather.

No one understands better than myself the difficulties and vexations of such literary enterprises, but there *is* a demand for the above, and such a man as your husband would succeed easily and pleasantly by mere weight of character, where others would find hard struggling.

The *Advertiser* is *defunct* in influence and editorial ability. Its correspondence is all that keeps it up with the press at large; its age and long possession of the field are all that make it powerful in New Jersey. *This is a well understood fact hereabouts.*

. . . Am I not a good, loquacious correspondent? The fact is that my heart has been pent up so many years that all its filial love and interest are gushing forth! The poetry of the soul—so fresh from the pure fountain of your affections—in your last letter, has been imbibed with tears of love and joy, by my thirsty spirit. Dear Mother! You are more precious to me every hour!—what more can I say?

. . . I have *no* "enthusiasm" in publishing matters, and my talk about the "Review" is simply an exercise of judgment—based on observation.

To the Same.

April 20, 1857.

Shall leave N. Y. for Elizabeth City to-morrow, I think, if 'tis pleasant. Freddy is better, but very weak in his back. He is very bright and pretty, and his eyes are black as I remember Mary Burnet's were. Why don't the girls write me as promised. Do they remember us at all.

The Reverend ——— talks of a voyage to Europe ere long. It is very fashionable lately for our ministers to be afflicted with hoarseness rendering such a trip necessary, but ——— takes his disagreeable prescription *before the disease*, with amazing fortitude. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church!" You seem to think I hate or envy—and speak of littlenesses etc.—I assure you I only think I have a right to enjoy my smile, and haven't the *least* bitterness of feeling towards ———. I reserve strong passions for *higher* game.

On the following letter to his mother, Mr. Stedman wrote in March, 1894: "The letter of a poor sick boy."

ELIZABETH, June 14, 1857.

MY DEAREST MOTHER: . . . I am free to confess that *I* have a peculiar distaste to having "Scripture" thrown at my head, as Dr. Bellamy threw his Bible at the polecat. If "language is useful only for the purpose of concealing one's thoughts" (Don't Talleyrand say so?) the Bible is useful for affording quotations in support of *any* mood you happen to be in. So let us have done with cant, and have more true religion. I don't believe that the text you derive so much comfort from "*Wives, etc.*" has anything to do with your staying more than seven years abroad; I *do* believe that your own interests, the interests, of the girls, and, in short, the general *necessities* of the case, render it highly proper and important that you should conform yourself in all respects to the wishes of Mr. K., and I accordingly thoroughly approve of your resolution so to do—but not on any scriptural basis! Seeing at once that your quoting letter was designed for another market, I sent it to Murray Hill, *as requested*, and I presume it has greatly edified your brothers, parent, sister, etc., etc. As for me, I am philosophic enough to see *common sense* in your course, and looking at matters through this medium, and placing myself in Mr. K's position, I say that he does right to do, just as he chooses. . . .

I have some little time *almost* every day when I am strong enough to write, and need not attend to business. What shall I do with this? Time is precious! Shall I any longer write, study, etc., for amusement, love, friendship? or shall I try to do a little of what I ought to do before I die—what I was sent into the world to do?

From the time you left America until 1853-4—that is from my 15th to 18th years, I wrote occasionally, what I then thought was very fine, and which now, *artistically*, I can find little fault with. Mrs. Browning says she "holds it strange that nearly all young Poets should write old." By Jove! I wrote *young*—just as I felt, intensely *sensuous* and *fanciful.* The *art* of poetry I had then as well as now; it was nature with me—but I had not experience nor the philosophic "years"—that I knew and did not try to write *old.* These poems I now have on hand. At 18 I began to fall in love with *life*, and for subsequent years neglected to write, while plunging into the world's excitement and cares. Yet all the time, for five years I have *studied* hard, read much, suffered, enjoyed, loved and observed; thus fitting myself for the second stage of my "great office"—thus preparing for the full fruition of earnest, *thought-freighted* song. And I have said, all along, that when 25 I should begin to write again and to publish. Two or three years I exercised my *Art* in daily, forced newspaper editorials, so that I have been continually in the *neighborhood* of my Life's proper turnpike, tho' wandering among side-thickets. Now I am, first of all, looking over and preparing my "juvenile poems," against what may happen, if I live long enough; then, if my lamp still burns, I shall commence more important and elevated writing, and shall try to accomplish what I have been planning during my *five* years of *thought* and *experience.* With all my knowledge of the necessity for *haste*, I would not commence authorship at 18—despite the wishes of foolish friends—knowing that I had better die unknown, than known as a *second-rate* man. And now it is, perhaps, too late! Ah, Mother, what avails it to possess the key to the riddle of the Sphinx, the lore of the ancients—the knowledge of all secret and marvellous things—what avails it to be learned and competent beyond measure, if you are doomed to silence and uselessness. Just when you are all ready for your work,—*just* then, Nature revenges herself on those who despised her. The stern Nemesis, ever attendant upon a neglect of *physical education*, ill-health, comes in and shakes a boding finger! Then follows—

> "—the blind Fury with the abhorred shears
> And slits the thin-spun life!"

But, if I live long enough, I shall yet write a few short poems—also a long Anglo-American half-pastoral on *The New Godiva*, a drama—*Hypatia*—and then—but I shan't have time! However; henceforth I indulge myself in no pleasant communings—no sauntering papers for Reviews and Magazines—*no long delightful letters*—I have little time to waste. Even what I wish to accomplish is not so much for reputation's sake—that I have calmly been brought to value little—to resign contentedly—and yet it *was* my ruling motive. But from a sense of the "*fitness of things*," from an æsthetic, morbid hatred of *incompleteness*, I hate to go into the other spheres without my scars and banners. It is not *decent* to die and not have done a thing you could have best done and desired most to do. And then, I yet have a faint hope, that a copyright of something I could publish, if I live long enough, may be of use to my darling, sometime.

This is my course—to live as long as I can—earn my living—and see if I cannot yet accomplish *a little*.

But I work against the tide. My heart is so affected that writing this letter makes it palpitate violently, and for this and kindred reasons, you must bear with short and simple notes hereafter. But do not forget me—trust me that *all you* write is read and thought over—that it cheers and nourishes me—that my *spirit* whispers to you across the ocean, (if you could only hear it!) tho' my *letters* say little. So write *in full* to me—you have not a family to *support;* offices of tenderness are your "business." Now in relation to my visiting Europe for health's sake, at my own or other's expense, I have a word to say. In the first place, the voyage would do me no good. Consumption is understood better than it was; hard exercise, other than walking, is a specific necessity with me—I long for it, as a drunkard for brandy. On ship-board you are on deck, at most, one-third of the time. All you can do is to walk, and then you are in the way. The cabin-air is bad; the ocean-air a sudden change. But if the air was pure above and below, it would only do me a *negative* good, that is, no *hurt*. Bad air at once distresses me, but good air does me no *good*, if I sit still and quietly inhale it. Here I can ride horseback every day, and in the summer I am as well off here as anywhere. In the Winter I had better go South and West, to be sure—inland and warm—anywhere *away* from the ocean. The marshes you speak of don't affect me, as I am not near them, and go into N. Y. in the *Boat* daily in the Summer, and, secondly, that *malaria* which generates "fever and ague" rarely injures the lungs. So that the voyage to Europe is not *essential* to my *health*, and therefore not "before all other things." Then again, I would not stir one step without Laura—I need her presence and love, and we cannot go together, of course, with Freddy and nurse etc. Again, "what can I save?" is my constant thought. I have no money to throw away.

And yet, if there has been one longing passion of my heart, since my seventh birthday, above all others, it is that I might live near you and see you often. And I here solemnly declare that I cannot die happy, for many, many reasons, without I can see you face to face, and tell you *many things*, *first*. These things I shall soon put down [on] paper for you to read and execute if you survive me.

Yet with all this yearning, this mad infuriate frenzy at the necessity which keeps you there and me here forever, I have acknowledged to myself that, from your last letters, it is plainly *a fact* that—owing to your ill-health and mine—we are to *never* meet on earth. Either of, or both, you and I will die in a few years. This is so—I have made up my mind to it, and am glad to see *you* have so "contentedly" and *Biblically;* mine is not the "contentment" of the Bible—it is a simple despairing resignation to Fate, and despair is *always* calm! This is, or has been my greatest sorrow; the last blow has been struck; I am now invulnerable; nothing can in future harm me!

I have stayed in the East five years, and sucked in my death-air that I might welcome you on your return. It is all over now! *I* shall never come to Italy. From this long and sad, but necessary detail, which will be final, of all my circumstances and conclusions you must judge of all my future conduct. Hereafter *I* live to suffer patiently and work rapidly—self-denying and earnest; and you must do the same. I *will* quote one text—"Blessed are they that mourn"—sorrow brings its own "comfort." We are sufficiently *en rapport* to understand the *inner sense* of the beatitude.

You see that it does not do for me to write letters to one I love. My disease excites me beyond measure occasionally; when I write for Art's sake, I am cool enough and slow—but I am now *talking*, and it must be the last conversation of the kind. It makes me sick. You must not suppose that I am not cheerful, from what is written, before, nor that I have been startled or astonished by the result of the examination. I trust that in general thought and action this is not the case with me. But all this I should not have told you, if there was the least chance—either of your *coming home*, or of my complete recovery. After this, don't ask me any questions except in relation to such facts as you are really anxious to know, for I cannot bear the exertion of answering;—that is, of giving full explanations, and anything *less* on paper is productive of misunderstandings.

MONDAY

Your elegant letters (they *are* always so) have afforded me both consolation and delight; and yet the very accounts of your intercourse with those persons and scenes which I have long known spirit-wise, but can never see or meet, give me a *pang within* the pleasure they afford. Paintings, Opera, Lectures, *Conversaziones*,—I have to give them all up—and letters on my favorite themes I can no longer *write*, having neither strength nor time. But I can *read* them, and coming from you, fresh with the very spray of *Castalia*, they are indeed delightful! And your passionate words of love—rising even to poetry—have all sunk in to my appreciative, yearning, thankful heart. So write to me the same as ever. That your loving recognition of Laura is a source of great happiness to us both, I need not tell you. My early marriage though, was hardly an ill-step—I think; you should perhaps not say "good coming out of evil." It is now very evident that I should have never known what a *home* is, or found even a brief tranquility, had I not married young. And now, in all my trouble, I am daily thankful that I have been permitted to enjoy for three years that love which everyone *is born* to possess. "Let no man, at death, be accounted *unhappy*, or *unfortunate*, if he has inspired one being with love for himself!" At 20, too, I was so wearied that my acquaintances thought me twenty-five, and was old enough to marry, I think. Now, the one great sorrow with me is that you will never get acquainted with Laura during my life—if, indeed, you ever see her at all.

I hope this sad letter will not affect you as severely as *your* sad letter did me; but it is necessary you should know these matters—otherwise you might expect more of me than I could perform. *Your* letter reached me on a day when I felt bad enough, anyhow, and it crushed me with *despair*. But now the bitterness is past. . . .

Charley is again heard from; at Norwich, while I was there, the news came that his ship *sailed for home* from New Zealand, Feb. 12th. He is now expected *every day;* his ship being heavily loaded, *I* look for him about the 4th of July. His property is all safe. The hope of his speedy arrival buoys me up beyond measure, and *you shall know* it by letter—the moment he comes.

You are quite excited over Mr. Potiphar's real-estate speculations. Real Estate Brokerage has been my business for a year or more, and I have been twice West. Prices are *very much inflated;* lots on the prairies are held by speculators at *N. Y. City prices*, and though many have "realized" no sane person now buys. There will soon be a general Real Estate Western "*Crash*" and all wise men are looking for it. Everyone has put funds into land and owes for more—it is no time *now* to buy land—prices will come down. When I came of age I could not have invested in Real Estate, if I had desired; my cash was withheld—I was largely in debt. You are not here to listen, and I cannot go into details on paper of my affairs, as you wish, for I have not strength or patience. Suffice it to say, that on my maturity I was encumbered with many difficulties; that I looked *long* and *thoughtfully* to see if I could live without business, but found I could *not;* that I carefully felt my way into financiering; that I made money, like others, and better than most; and that I have never lost *one cent* in legitimate or *outside* operations; that I was exceedingly fortunate, and was promising myself that in *one year more* I could step out on $25,000. when I lost two-thirds that sum in one night *by fire;* that I then commenced brokerage in New York with almost nothing and no friends, and now, at the end of one year have furnished my house, lived well, and established a splendid business, and if I could only attend to it, and carry it on, could in a few years be well off enough for a poor poet;—but *can you expect* a young man cut down before 25 to leave a fortune to his family?—or call him improvident if he does not? What will become of Laura, God only knows!—and it makes me half-crazy. So long as I have life and health, I can support my family *well*, (and write poetry too,) and never ask a favor of my rich Uncles, . . . *I* never hang on their skirts! But you must *all* do for her I love, after I am gone, what I have never asked others to do for me, and do it *in such a way* that it will not humiliate, for love is "better than diamonds." I hope everything from the manly heart of Brother Charley, who loved Laura as his sister, before he left, and after whom I named my boy. One *friend* of my own generation and blood is worth a hundred monied Uncles. So much for my property, and I think I wrote it all before—last October—you perhaps forget, or did not read very close what I then wrote. You see that I am like other men—few make their fortunes before they have time to *try*. I have done all that *any* man could, and, my friends think, have acted carefully and prudently. If you were here I could be more explicit. You see how I labor to write in detail, as you desire.

I have been much delighted with dear Mary's letter. It is elegant and loving, and altogether remarkable for her years. Give her and Clem. many kisses, and tell them I long to love them face to face, with all a brother's affection. Their nephew is now doing finely—his back is nearly well—he has five teeth and almost talks—his recovery has been a *great* and *unexpected blessing*—we made up our minds to lose him several times, but he has stood it bravely, and we can now hardly give him up. If he gets through this Summer, we shall feel greatly encouraged. He is growing very handsome—looks just like his Mother—no Stedman about him! Clem. must write me next. I will try and get strength to write both soon. You may think it strange that I dread writing letters in future, and yet write so much now. This is my last long letter; when I have so much to say, I *will* keep writing, and this makes it very bad for me. I write with intense rapidity, like you, when corresponding—and you are my *only* correspondent.

I see Thomas Kinney often and we are on *very* good terms. He is a good fellow, and sensible. I am writing late at night for to-morrow's steamer, and cannot say much about Literature—my promise *must* be "Italian"—doubly-so, in fact, *always* deferred, I fear. But I *will* write again—about *Felicita*—*your* literary career, your accounts of literary people etc., if I find a moment when I am neither sick, fatigued or *busy*.

One thing, dear Mother: You speak of *courage* to shew "Our

Charlotte" your drama. Now have more self-respect and less "*hero-worship.*" You are *as good a judge as she*, and have a more finished mind, though perhaps not so much *genius for acting*. Do you not admire other people too much—pay too much deference to the dictum of notabilities? I don't see how *you* can mention Mrs. Stowe and the noble Elizabeth Barrett Browning in the same breath, and yet you speak of the former in quite as fervent language as of the authoress of "Casa Guidi Windows" and "Bertha in the Lane," etc. Be self-contained—and don't forget to "still-*res*pect" while you

> "still *sus*pect yourself
> In lowliness of heart—"

Why should you be "*encouraged*" by what Longfellow or Lord says of your poem—unless *you* feel *without doubt*, that it *is* fine; and if you do, *why*, in Heaven's name, should you care for the reviewers?

You say you have never seen my "manly form." It is all gone now—I am thin, homely, old-faced—sick.

You speak in a letter to Grandmother of my "change of heart"—I have not had any—I never was a *heathen*, and never shall be—a *Presbyterian;* the good folks have just found out the former, and I don't care to trouble them by telling them the latter. I am religious, but not creed-bound. I pray and try to be happy, and therefore please God. My sheets are all full. Good Night, and God Bless You, my dear Mother.

The homecoming of his brother Charles Frederick on July 1, 1857, from a four years' sea-voyage taken for his health, was a matter of great happiness to Stedman. Many merry evenings were enjoyed at the little cottage in Elizabethtown, while "Uncle Charley" related his sea adventures, or amused the family by his awkward attempts to hold Freddy, his namesake, in whom he took an unusual pride. The young father would rally the younger uncle on his bachelor unfamiliarity with baby needs and demands, while the tiny room—a dining room and library combined—echoed with their laughter.

In the early Fall of 1857, Stedman again found it wise to resume quarters in the city, the reasons for which step, as well as other news, he gives in the following letter to his mother:

280½ West 19th Street, New York.
November 1, 1857.

Your letter dated on my birth-day, in accordance with the dear old custom—and bringing up golden memories of the *Oases* that were nomadic, and used to *come to me* in the lonely desert-boyhood at Norwich—your letter reaches me in another home, and happier every way than when I received your last. Charley heard from you the other day, albeit *his* "birth-day letter" never arrived, and from your note to him I was glad to hear of your improved health, which news is confirmed in the one now before me. After all, these letters, though humbugs in comparison with those closer happinesses of daily presence, are comforting things in their way, and answer much the same purpose with the knocks on the wall by which prisoners in stony cells cheer each other, when voices are forbid. Here, then, is my answering knock! The first few cold, raw days showed me very plainly that it would be futile for me to attempt to do any business in N. Y. this winter and live in Elizabethtown. The air on the Bay caused such severe congest on that I was literally used up before I arrived at the office mornings. This salt quality of air distresses me exceedingly. Then the country night air is much worse than the city for one's lungs—giving me additional colds every night I slept with the windows open, and sleeping with windows open is a necessity in my bronchial and catarrhal combinations of disease. So I rather reluctantly concluded to move over to the city—having a delightful cottage, furnished in good taste, and fearing the $1000. additional yearly expenditure of city life. But my cottage was especially receptive of the cold gusts of Winter. You remember I was driven over to N. Y. last January—and then, I thought that the additional time I should be able to devote to business after the change, would increase my income more than the difference of cost.

Such has proved to be the case. In the summer I did not get in till 10¼ A. M. and started for home at 2½ P. M. which gave me four hours in N. Y., and was half killed daily by the three hours on the water. Now I step into the stage at my door at 8 A. M.—travel nice and warm to the office, where I can stay all day, if I choose, very comfortably, though I generally come home to dinner at 2½ P. M., and "loaf" the rest of the day in my library. I find that, either way, I can make just enough to live on, and no more; a fellow who gets married at twenty, and has to spend some thousands before he gets into an income, (i. e. learns the secret of turning sand into gold) does *well* if he can *support* himself—to say nothing at all of *laying up*, which only those who have health and years of life are able to do. As it is, I am the only man of my acquaintance that attends to books and business at once, and with this disadvantage and suffering terribly from ill-health, I contrive to realize a larger income than any fellow, twenty-four years of age, and not a member of a large mercantile house, I have ever met with. I make $2500. to $3000. per annum, and if I was sure of life for twenty years could of course get rich. These details I mention, as you are interested in my matters, and have made some inquiries in your letters occasionally which shew me that, with your bump of *order* etc., you would make a *good business* man, if you were not at once the dearest and shrewdest of women. If you were home, dear Mother, I should go to you for advice in all things, and we would succeed again and again, and delight in each other's triumphs. Home! ah, the "very word is like a knell, to call me back—"and—

—Would it could call *you* back!

Well, I have been so very busy moving and with more sickness, that I have had no chance to write you hitherto. Charley has helped me much. He and I were a fortnight looking for a house and finally hit just the *right* one (I always will look, if it's a year, until I am *suited*.) Our new home is a newly built English Basement, four stories, narrow, with halls and circular stairs in the middle—a much more genteel and elegant form for small families, than the old "three story and Basement." No *side-halls* up stairs, you know. On the first floor we have a reception-room and dining-room; (I *won't* go "down cellar" to eat!) on the second a parlor and hall, and a back parlor which I have made into my library and furnished in black leather and black walnut; third story, *our* bedroom, bath-room and guest-room, fourth Charley's room, Ella's room, Mr. Ellis' room—(my partner and friend). In the lower basement a kitchen and servant's room, cellar, etc. We have every possible modern luxury, and are prettily furnished throughout. It was a terrible job moving over, but, after all rather did me good. We were safely ensconced by the 15th September.

Laura intended then to visit her mother at once, (whom she has not seen for two years) and see a sister, who is fast dying of consumption—our pet disease—by which she has lost another within a short period, though her family are *not* phthisical, and are only losing the *proportion* which the New England climate invariably demands. Just so the old dragon used to claim ten virgins from the Cretan city every year. Who will be the Cadmus of our time and find the antidote to this fearful scourge?

. . . .

Charley has got his property all correct I think. . . . All his money matters are in my hands—or, rather, he follows my advice—and I can say truly that he could not have done better than he has done. I have aimed rather to have him steer clear of *loss* than to make large gains, during these terrific revulsions, and have been *fortunate* where hundreds of our fellows have gone down. I wonder daily at the folly of our capitalists who stake their all on chances that my immature judgment considers reckless. Any man who, from motives of enthusiasm or petty vanity, will identify himself with the interests of any Railroad built on borrowed capital, is a fool, and this is what ——— and many others have been doing for years, and now the crash has come! You of course before this, know of the troubles of the Delaware Western Lackawanna Railroad in which your husband *was* interested as a bondholder, if not as a stockholder—how much I do not know, nor care. But how any man, going abroad, *could invest* in any Railroad *stock* I don't understand. Railroad *Bonds* on a *land basis* like those of the Illinois Central Railroad are good always, but I never owned, nor will I ever own, a share of *stock*, to hold over one month. I should think Mr. K. would feel *obliged* to come home, now, to get his affairs into decent condition—and that's the reason I very unfeelingly say above, that I don't care how much you have lost. "It's an ill wind" etc. . . .

The O. Life & Trust Co. I thought myself an A. No. I affair. It's fall astonished everybody—even its own Directors. If you had $5000. there, it adds severely to your other losses. Tell Mr. K. if he *is* interested in Delaware Western & Lackawanna by all means not to sell. They will work out *temporarily*, and *after* the great fall which we are looking for (the "lowest deep") on the receipt of the reaction from England caused by our Bank suspensions, etc., there will be a slow rise, culminating next Summer, when his Delaware Western & Lackawanna will be thirty per cent better than now. The tendency to day is—decidedly *up* for Government and States—down for Railroad shares and second class Bonds—up a *little* for first class first Mortgage Railroad Bonds, among which Delaware Lackawanna & Western first Mortgage may *perhaps* be placed. But Uncle William is an enthusiast, and I would not take *his* opinion of any railway he has helped to *push*, for five dollars! That railroads *ought* to pay, there is no doubt, but that, under our wretched *system*, they don't pay, is equally true. A *few* near New York are exceptions, but those out West, or leading West, in times of panic, have to pay fifteen per cent exchange on their funds etc. I talk so much on this subject, as everyone now feels *sadly* interested about it, and many are "talking stocks" from lips "long unused to the money mood." . . .

Miss Cushman is acting here and greater than ever—at the zenith of her powers. *Did* she visit you at Florence. I sat down to discuss poetry, Tennyson, etc.,—to write about what I best enjoy—but am not a good boy? I have gone along and written all the dull *practical* news—all old to me—that I thought you would feel interested in—so that you might see *just how we are.* And now, as I feel stronger, and can write without the palpitation of the heart that placed an embargo on my letter writing last summer; and as I have several days before the next steamer, I am going to write you another letter *by the same mail.* I will not be cheated, by *necessary writing*, out of the delightful, superfluous literary talk. No!!

. . . Do you know that I inherit every little trick you have, and though I write a sharp running fist, always hold my pen as though I were writing a "back-hand." And so, good night, with love to all, and a hundred kisses to you (ah! that I could bestow them!) from

Your affectionate boy
EDMUND.

To the Same.

November 3, 1857.

My DEAREST MOTHER—I send you another letter by this mail, written last Sunday, which you had perhaps better read first, if they arrive together, as it contains about all the news matters to date. They took up so much room that I resolved to write you another letter, which should not have a word in it about anything but those literary matters which are as yet undiscussed between us. To prelude, let me say that I cannot help considering letters on critical subjects, between people at such distances, accustomed to look at things from different standpoints, perfectly useless and unsatisfactory. We cannot talk enough; we cannot answer each little thought of the other; half our truest thoughts find no utterance. The time is precious; the strength is precious; ah, these wastings of golden sands! I write now, because you have *tempted* me to it, in spite of my past entreaties. I cannot bear that on grounds of faith very dear to me and *very true*, to which *years* of patient, loving study have led me, *we* should differ even in word. For years I have loved to catch your ideas—to follow in the train of your own education; now, whatever I have seen for myself, be it right or wrong, I will tell you of. Here let me disclaim any forwardness or that boyish self-assumption of opinion which is so distasteful in the eyes of grave men—the hoary-headed gatherers of knowledge. Mr. K. must not *this time* accuse me of this error, for I have tried to guard against it. Time after time have you *urged* me to speak, and till now I have been silent—partly to avoid so grave a criticism. Remember then that I only express my opinions on a certain subject to be named, after *long* and *modest* reluctance; and now, at length yielding to repeated entreaties, I speak out frankly and like a man—hoping that my words may find kindred echoes in your own fine soul. Another thing: it is impossible, in framing *epistolary* opinions, to be otherwise than *dogmatic*—one has little room for argument. If I give mouth to ideas at variance with your own modes of thought, you must try to gather from a little sketch of my own literary culture, the *manner* in which I have arrived at such conclusions.

You know that I, as you say, inheriting my literary tastes from you, turned to books at eight years old as naturally as a child to its mother's breast. I was surrounded, too, by every possible *force* of the mind, and stimulated by the language and example of yourself, who were the angel of all my young dreams and the rewarder of my ambition. So I went along, *reading everything*,—a heterogeneous mass—till nearly twelve or thirteen years old, at which time I had got along as far as the "Hemans stage" of nonsense, which attacks the majority five or six years later. You then gave me a copy of Byron, with rather loose plates and appendages. It was the *wisest thing you ever did.* He had been a proscribed, and deliciously terrific unknown pleasure to me hitherto. Now I plunged into him with a gusto—and greatly to the horror of my Argus-eyed Aunts, who, while they considered me thereby on the high-road to the personage in whose honor the "Satanic School" received its name, yet did not dare to quite forbid my perusal of a book my *mother* took the responsibility of giving me. As for Uncle, he said "the boy had got to read it some time and he might as well do it now!" And he was right, and so were you! In a month I was an eloquent votary of the romantic, passionate, subjective "School," of which Byron is unquestionably the English head, as Goethe is the German. For two years I had the *fever* severely, and then slowly began to convalesce, owing to a few hints from the only influential mind I ever came into contact with—a few words, dropped by chance from your husband's lips, were snatched up by me, ready to catch every drop from the fountain of truth, and set me to thinking for days afterward. The idea of poetry as an *Art*, began to dawn upon me. Soon after I came across Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats. Wordsworth I was not as yet up to, by any means; The more imaginative, or perhaps fanciful, productions of Coleridge, and the whole of Shelley and Keats, were seized upon by me with avidity, and I then merged into an appreciation of the *musical*, *sensuous* and *artistic*, qualities of poetry.

So far had I got when I went to College, and there I continued for two years. This was again good—it made me an *artist.* My ear was cultivated—my passion for sweet sounds—my "mind's eye" received its knowledge of *color* and *effect.* I now had grasped all of poetry save the *soul*, and yet began to hear its divine *inner* harmonies afar off; blissful tears were mine, at the *instinctive perception* of what as yet I could not grasp wholly or logicize. What youthful student, not to say poet, has not felt all this!

The Youth, who daily farther from the East
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
  And by the vision splendid
  Is on his way attended.

I was now *objective* enough in my poetic loves—looking upon poetry merely as an *art*, and delighting in the creation of *beauty* only, and of that beauty which is an entity in itself—*in itself sensuous* etc., not confined like the passionate *subjective*, to the experience and introspection of the maker. At this stage I wrote all my "Spenserian" poems, the "Ode to Pastoral Romance," etc., etc.—was sixteen years old, and certainly the introducer of entirely new theories to the aspiring critics at Yale.

But after a little while, as I grew older, I pondered on the *realities* of life, the *earnest* element which should pervade all noble art—and the few words once dropped by your husband, not then understood, now gave me the *key* to the *Philosophical.* This element I had always considered akin to the didactic, and therefore a heresy; now I learned that the Philosophical element discovered something "far more deeply interfused," taught *without being didactic*, and was the "top and crown" of imaginative thought. So I changed, and progressed to the love of Wordsworth, and the true rendering of Shakspeare, whom I now found a *new friend*, though I had known his *face* all my life. So I changed—but my changes made me skeptical—I did not, with the discovery of each new joy *discard the old one.* Ah! that is the mistake of the progressionists. I found myself not prepared to say which was the dearest, best and loftiest of my poetic loves. *Not one could be spared.*

At last, some five years ago, the great final truth came upon me—viz. that the great Poet—the great Artist—is a UNIVERSALIST, an ECLECTIC! The greatest is he who is at once the noblest *Artist* i. e. whose creations are the most dramatic, the most musical, the most sensuous, the most perfect in chords and discords; is *also* the best *Philosopher*—reads best the secret of the "seven stars and the solar year"—sees best the true meaning and aspiration of the human phenomenon—is best in harmony with the inner teachings of Nature; is also the most *Passionate*, proving him *human*, and able to strike those "electric chains" which bind us all together and make the "whole world kin." This is the truth at which I arrived five years ago, and after that peroid of *study*, such study as *men* perform—such application of thoughts and books to life as true men and noble women wot of. I see no reason to think otherwise, but daily the *eclecticism*, the *universalism* of poetry, and indeed of all arts, is dearer and truer to me. The poet shall belong to no school; he shall neither be "spasmodic," nor "philosophical," nor "introspective," yet he shall be all of these and more. He shall love Beauty, both for itself, and for what it is *typical* of. If broadly gifted he shall now sing lyric outbursts, like the songs of birds; anon shall study the meaning of his own fine instincts, and of all nature and the "mind of man," like Wordsworth with calm eye looking down; again shall catch the "manners and the mode" so truly that he who runs may read the lesson; and yet again shall strike those common chords, which all the masses feel, and which endear him to those who know what it is to be and to suffer! Such an one was Shakspeare—the *myriad*-minded—who wrote not only the meditations of Hamlet, but the *Song of Ariel.* The true poet is master of his art—*all* things belong to him—*all* tools and materials of *trade* are *his*. Yet each has genius more peculiarly in a certain direction. Shakspeares are not but once. One sees the highest point to be obtained through the means of the English Blank Verse, and you have a Milton. Now grant that his is the greatest perfection to which Blank Verse can be brought; then that style is the property of all other poets, and will be the result of the labors of all others, who are as great. They are perhaps not imitators—like causes produce like results. The great poet takes the best of all material offered, in whatever line he works, as the sculptor takes the finest piece of Parian he finds—careless whether Praxiteles may have used its fellow block, before him.

Now I have gone through with all this—rapidly and earnestly—it being the first time I have ever found time or occasion to put on paper what I talk daily—I have gone through with this as an *apology* for any opinions, apparently *dogmatic*, which I may hereafter express, and to give you a key to my manner of getting at these opinions. Your husband will at least see that I have a rule of life, a standpoint from which I look at things, or, in other words, literary and æsthetic *principles*—perhaps wrong, but better than no creed at all. O yes, better, if not correct, than great doubt, for what does Wordsworth say;

Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Catch glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

As in religious—so in æsthetic faith!

One more prefatory remark I will make. That plagiarism is a foul crime, all scholars agree; that *sheer imitation* is a thing to be despised, is quite as true. But if the Republic of Letters have discovered that the perfected style of some great master is the highest degree of rhythm, condensation, etc., to which a special verse (Heroic, Lyric, etc.,) can be carried; and if a later poet finds himself naturally creative of the same high finished effect, is he to adopt a *feebler* style and other than *his own*, to avoid odious comparison? No! Beauty is governed by laws as severe and discoverable as are Mathematics. He who approximates the nearer to these laws, is the greater Artist. And you may be sure that, after all, every true mind will throw its own peculiar gauze about the *majority* of its creations—a certain *je ne sais quoi*—a trade-mark—will be there. And, in accordance with all this, poets do arrange themselves in groups, as they march down the vistas of their Paradise, while, before them all, walks singly some great *Universalist*, like Shakspeare, or some grand Monographist, like Homer—as Dante depicts him, with drawn sword in hand and eyes upturned to Heaven!

These are, faintly, my rules of judgment. *Partial criticism is to be condemned*—this is the result of all. I say nothing new; though the ideas came to *me* first from experience; since, I have seen them confirmed by some, and scouted by others. *I* hold to them.

Judged by this meter, what of Tennyson, Mrs. Browning, etc.,—and what should we all do? In a filial manner, let me scold you a little. You speak of the "real spasmodic school," the "spasmodics of Maud"—the *puerilities* of "The Princess." Hear that, ye bardlings, and take courage! My dear, dear Mother, don't use cant or slang expressions, about any one, till you know him thoroughly. I know well of a class of persons, who are so pleased with repose in the divine calm of a poet, now of the past, that they, like Lotos Eaters, are satisfied. They want no more; their mental cravings are supplied; new things are distasteful. A few poems, written by Alfred Tennyson at his earliest literary debut, and *one* poem, foolishly published by him within a short time, have seemed (perhaps justly, to this class to be tainted with an artistic disease more to be dreaded than the small pox—called the "spasmodic." I, who am beyond all schools (in theory) and have had *all* the *poxes*, am not afraid of contagion, and am willing to look farther. But *they* are content: they cry "spasmodic! Beware! Beware!" Are you not *echoing* the cry, without thorough investigation? Have you read Tennyson thoroughly—do you know *all* about him?—if not, you are heedless and unjust to say such a thing because others say it. If you had not said—"the *puerilities* of 'The Princess'"—if your ghost had "taken any shape but that," the murder would not have come out! It is the first time I ever heard, from any critic, of the "*puerilities* of 'The Princess.'" But I shall come to that in a minute, and meantime, don't think me impolite, and remember you demanded exactly my opinions.

I say I am not afraid of contagion, and dare go farther than "Maud" or "Claribel." You shall go with me, and what shall you find? You shall find, First: A *Poet*, who dared, at a time when all English poets were running into the most extended and extenuated styles, to prove by his works that the greatest Poet, *other* things being equal, is the greatest *Artist*. Who condensed and finished *everything* he wrote, without injuring it otherwise, and proved that the greater the finish, the greater the poem, for true finish never reduces the strength. Tennyson is effeminate, only where the theme demands grace and melody above all things else. Second: You shall find a poet who has preferred to bring forth few great poems, rather than feeble ones—who has spent years in perfecting what shall last forever. Third: He is a Poet who has tried *successfully*, every department of English verse, and is as great as the *greatest*, in all. His *songs* firstly, are *perfect*. In fact, you people that ignore all poetry not of a certain kind, know him only as a musical, suggestive and (you say) finical, song-writer.

Read the "*Bugle Song*," "Break, Break! Break!," etc. He has equalled the Shakspearan ballads. Next, his *idyls* are exquisite. O what pictures of English scenery; what colors! What green meadows and running waters! How simply fine! They have all that *truth*—that pre-Raphaelism most dear to the lovers of Wordsworth, and being in Pentameter, have the pure swell of Tennyson's *own* Blank Verse. How full, too, of love and faith, and all holy, beautiful instincts! Read the "Gardener's Daughter"—"Dora" and "The Brook"—(The latter in his new volume)—Next: His half-ideal, half-metaphysical creations—such as "The Palace of Art"—"The Talking Oak."

Then those wonderful passionate poems, also metaphysical, and in the highest philosophical tone—viz. "Locksley Hall"—etc. Then his Ballads—"Edward Gray"—"Lady Clare," etc. Then those peculiar, delicious, ideal—*intensely ideal* and elevated productions, which are "Tennysonish," as you say, and nothing else—"The Lady of Shalott"—"The Day Dream" (a charming thing) "A Dream of Fair Women"—"Mariana," etc. And now I come to his greatest aspect—viz. as a writer of splendid Blank Verse and Lyric Stanza—strictly epic or philosophical. Since Milton and Shakspeare, there has been no such poetry of this kind—so great both in style and thought. I will judge any man's critical acumen by his opinion of "*Ulysses*"—the finest poem *of its length* in our language. Then "Saint Simeon Stylites," "*Œnone*"—the one how powerful—the other how wise and beautiful! Read *these three*, and then say "puerilities" if you have the heart. You don't know Tennyson. Lastly, I mention "*In Memoriam*" as a sustained effort of Philosophical thought wedded to the most perfect poetry possible. It is to be read, only, to be known. I have nothing more to say about it. And if such Pentameters as "The Princess" are *puerile*, I will burn *my* wand in despair.

I go through with this, not because I read no other poetry, but because you admire, *with me*, the "Tinturn Abbey," the "Ode on Intimations," etc., and the Sonnets of our great Wordsworth—but you do not know Tennyson as well and I herewith introduce you to him. I was disappointed in "Maud." He wrote it in a hurry, and published it, because the English people were expecting something of him, and *no poet writes well to order*. But "*The Brook*" redeems the Maud volume, after all. He won't make another mistake. Now, to end with Tennyson, I want to say that through all his writings, of every style, there runs, overtly or covertly, the truest, noblest, broadest philosophy of the age. He has made me wiser and better, and if his grand thoughts are expressed in the most finished and perfect manner, it is a fault that the thousand shiftless writers of *prosaic* verse would do well to imitate. I despise a poetic *sloven!*

You are probably tired of A. T. by this time, and think this poetic painter has found a Ruskin in me. Not so. I ignore no other poets, but you called forth this defence of a very great one among the rest. Now you know Wordsworth was accused of puerilities for twenty years, and W. did write hundreds of verses his own lovers don't read. Not so with Tennyson; those who know him, know how little they can spare. Now go and buy Tennyson for my sake—read *every* poem in all his volumes—read some of them many times, and see how much more delicious and strong they are each time, and see if he is not the great Universalist of the age. You had better do so; if you don't, I will send you an edition, largest size, by mail, and make you pay transatlantic postage. Think of that!

You ask me again about Mrs. Browning. I say what I said before, that I consider that of all living women, she has gone the farthest "within the veil." She stands under the very shadow of the wings of the cherubim. Such women as she and Rosa Bonheur (the magnificent "*Horse Fair*" of the latter is here on exhibition) make us glad that some angels are denied their wings and cannot yet fly away from Earth to Heaven. But when it comes to a direct comparison between E. B. B. and A. T., let us forget enthusiasm and be just. You may say of Tennyson, as I said before, that he masters his art, *always;* that Mrs. Browning often allows her art to master her. Mrs. B. frequently *sacrifices* an artistic result in order to bring out and develop the remotest subtlety of her *thought;* but Tennyson, with the same wonderful subtlety of thought, always contrives to develop it perfectly, and *at the same time* preserve the integrity of his *Art*. This distinction will be perceived and understood by any one who has read them *both* carefully. Hence the following remark on Mrs. B's last work: "Aurora Leigh" is a poem containing *enough poetry* to "set up" a half dozen poets; it is full of brilliant passages, is strikingly original, and the first two chapters alone shew that Mrs. B. has been through all the stages of poetic experience, has felt the yearnings and uttered the echoes of youth, and has "learned to unlearn" in her maturity. The poem, too, is *earnest* and takes hold of the *real*. But it is deficient in artistic structure. It is too long—being filled out by passages of very *unequal* merit, many of which should have been ruthlessly *pruned* by the author. Tennyson would have got all the *poetry* of the book, double the *thought*, and more of a *story*, in *one half the space*. As it is, the poem appears to have come hot and seething from the author's spiritual brain—it seems as if she scouted her art, in order to make the dignity of her soul more apparent. It seems as if she knew and took pride in those passages of true poetry and high art which her genius *would* create continually, but felt no regret at interspersing them with prosaic connections. Hence "Aurora Leigh" seems *firstly*—a *novel in verse*, and only *secondly*, a *poem*. What think you, and what says my father? The sonnets and ballads of Mrs. B. are equal to any of her works, I think. In all, she is intensely *subjective*, and stamps her own soul upon her poems. But Tennyson has that Godlike objectivity, which separates itself from its work, and looks upon life and earth through the telescope of a remoter sphere. You sympathize most with Mrs. B.—you kneel at the feet of the other. The one is something of a seraph—the other the prince of the cherubim. We can spare neither.

I speak reluctantly of your *Felicita*. And yet why should I have any compunction in speaking frankly of a poem by which *you* are not to be judged, as I am familiar with many short productions of your's worth a thousand *Felicitas*. It was a failure and justly so. Twenty copies were sent to my town, on the strength of my acquaintance, I suppose. The first one was sent to me. I read a few pages, and hurried to the book store and bought up all the rest. . . . The thing is not worthy of you. I who knew your exquisite taste, and had read many of your beautiful and artistic odes, etc., did not believe it possible you could make a blunder, so I had looked with eagerness for the book. O how I was disappointed! The theme is without interest—the metre forced and sometimes careless—there is no music, thought nor originality in it. In short it deserved not to live, and it is a glorious thing for you that it didn't. It fell stillborn, and *your* reputation is as clean as ever. It did neither harm nor good, and the few who read it have forgotten it. I can only account for your writing and publishing this poem, as you are so *truly* capable of equalling the *best* of poets, on the supposition that you had a confused idea of the necessity of catering to the popular, romantic taste, etc. If so, it was a mistake. A few leading minds make popular taste, and the best thing is best received. People want something substantial, or at least, *artistic*. Let the thing go, dear Mother, and *forget it*. Don't let anybody flatter you into thinking well of what I can easily see was hard for you to concoct. *You did not love that poem from its commencement*. Now did you? This is a true test. Your dramas and minor poems are sure to be good; the latter I know are. That gem in *Blackwood* indeed deserved its setting. It is a *poem*, truly; *artistic*, *human*, *earnest*. Write many such, my own dear, gifted Mother. Be true to your own self!

Tennyson and the Brownings, etc., are not *well* known (popularly) in America. I have grown up alone! I have never met ten men who read my favorite authors, or held to my opinions. So don't suppose that there is a "spasmodic" or "Tennysonistic" fever here, for there isn't. I echo nobody; all my companions are practical, working men, among whom I am the literary chap—having myself no literary acquaintance, and preferring to remain quiet till mature.

I want to suggest one thing. If even this panic does not drive you home, why will you not write a series of letters for the *Tribune*—just such as you write me, giving *literary gossip about people.* If you could do it without being known, and would be careful to say nothing of a compromising nature—they would be gladly received, paid for, and infinitely superior to any now published, and would make the all-powerful *Tribune* your friend for life. Send me the first of such a series, and I will arrange the matter. They should come once in ten days.

You say truly that I inherit all my poetry from you—nor shall I ever forget that "the Mother makes us most." My only hope is to be worthy of so dear a mother's love and esteem.

The "Heliotrope" is not so "Tennysonish" as "Heineish"—being directly in the style of H. Heine's ballads translated by Leland. A. T. never wrote in that metre in his life. It is suggestive—i. e. has all in it I could get into it, and then hints at a deeper sweetness. All poems of this class, if truly artistic, sound alike. I told you distinctly, it was a *waif.*

Do you remember my objections to Charley's speculating in Real Estate—my remarks about inflation—my prophecy of a crash. It has all proved true, and your Chicago friend may not find his garden worth what it was a year ago.

Now, dear Mother, you know a little of my poetic views. I am not swallowed up of poetry. I earn $8. per day, and my business friends don't know that I ever heard the word. But literature and the arts are my consolers, next to my love for a dear Mother and my own family. I have written this rapidly, at three intervals, to fulfil a promise, and my strength has hardly been equal to the task. Remember that it is a hastily penned letter, not an essay; and pardon my dogmatic, hasty language therefore. Perhaps my ideas will not displease yourself, or father, who forms your mind somewhat. Though we children cannot instruct, yet may we not amuse you by our assumption of older airs? So my little Freddy does me. Don't again tempt me to write on literary themes. I am very, very—sadly weak, and easily taken down. Yet tell me if you understand me.

. . . .

Whereas the influence of Tennyson upon Stedman, as on some of his contemporaries, was so vital that he became unknowingly a chameleon, he has shown how he revolted at such an accusation. An incident connected with his poem "Flood-Tide," written at Elizabethtown, in 1857, is remembered by Mrs. Stone. To tease Stedman, Ellis vowed that he was imitating the famous English bard. Indignantly the younger poet cried out: "Ella, does that remind you of 'Locksley Hall'?"

References in letters of years more mature reveal that Stedman came himself to recognize his "early Tennysonian proclivities." For example: "You confabulated with Tennyson? How few Americans have had that experience. At *vingt ans* I would have gone on hands and knees to see him. And he is still to me the first of the Victorian Poets,—notwithstanding 'Becket' and the critics." In the last year of his life, when he gave certain directions for a final preservation of his poetry, he omitted various early poems, among these "Flood-Tide," because he considered that it was too much dominated by its "Locksley Hall" measure, and, because he thought "the philosophy all wrong—except for underlings"; he omitted also "The Ordeal by Fire" as "dominated by another Tennysonian metre." But, he who would acquaint himself more intimately with Mr. Stedman's struggles and ambitions, his high courage and resolute faith, during these early days, may do so by reading these poems.

Stedman's ballad, "Fuit Ilium," completed several years later, was suggested at this period. Two years before his death, in response to a friendly inquiry, Mr. Stedman wrote:

"It pleases me to have you take an interest in that poem, as I remember that I wrote it *con amore*, and, among the songs of my youth, it has always been a favorite with me. Shortly before the Civil War, I resided at Elizabeth, and saw the demolition of the house in question. It was a fine Colonial structure on a street, crossing the main thoroughfare of the city. I think, but am not sure, that at one time it had been occupied by General Winfield Scott; however this may be, it was said to have been Washington's headquarters during the Revolutionary War. So many years have passed since the poem was written that I am hazy about the detail, and should be glad to learn the result of any further researches of yours.

"Mr. Longfellow honored the ballad with an insertion in the volume of his 'Poems of Places' devoted to the middle States."

To his Mother.

New York, November 25, 1857.

I have written you two long letters, since I received your last. But you sometimes feel like writing *something* on some subject, or to some*body*, for the very reason that you have the fit on you, and pens, ink and paper look inviting. Just so I feel to-night—the "power" is on me; really, I have no literary work which suits this evening's inclinations—so what can I do better than to scribble a loving message or two to my dear, absent Mother? Let me see! I have nothing literary to talk about, and if I had, should not dare to, after the countless pages of "extra wise-wove" stuff I sent you last. Nor is there much news; though this is far more of an "*Annus Mirabile*" than was Dryden's—with our financial crisis, Indian and Mormon Wars, Mayor Wood's bread-battles, and Bayadere Silks at three shillings per yard—sold in marble flummery-shops! The worst of our American money troubles is over—we having at length attained that delightful consummation, where we have millions of dollar's worth of goods, bought of all the world, and for which we never expect, and are not expected, to pay a cent. We take all the gold that comes, and pay none away. Are we not a happy people? They just begin to feel it, though, in England, France, Germany, etc. To-day, however, the news has arrived of the suspension of the Charter of the Bank of England, which we consider here a very good move, and likely to restore confidence—there being no "lower deep" to terrify the financial devils—("*poor* devils"—aren't they!) All our stocks are again up, in spite of sad past experience, and on the wings of $25,000,000. Gold and any amount of paper money, away above their true intrinsic value—to which, however, and I am sorry to say, Delaware Western and Lackawanna Railroad forms a notable exception—the Stock-holders being either too blind or too reckless to step forward and save this fine property from passing (probably) into the hands of the Bondholders. So much for money-matters, and you will understand that I pay you a great compliment in writing at all on a subject women generally ignore.

I, personally, hate business, and find myself writing about it from habit merely.—Cold weather has set in at length with a vengeance. "God Have Mercy on the Poor!"—as you once said in a poem. Of these poor I am one—in health, at least. The first raw Easterly wind knocked down my pretty castles about cured lungs. . . .

We have a pleasant dinner every Sunday. Almost always some of my few friends (my friends are not many, but are devoted, and always *come to me;* my state of health forbids new acquaintances) drop in. Last Sunday we had Dr. Perkins, (a noble-souled fellow and quite a *litterateur*, also Professor in the Hom. Med. Col.) Peter Gillin, an Irish gentleman of fine parts, and Harland—a sort of iconoclast, but very strong-thoughted. I have to keep very quiet, though, and listen more than talk.

Business is dull. I have sunk nearly all my *cash* I have laid up, above my furniture, etc., in *living* expenses, during the past season—every day looking for a revival of better times.

To the Same.

NEW YORK, December 13, 1857.

The other day I was astounded by a report from Samuel Milligan that you and yours were immediately to return, and perhaps were already on your way home! This news aroused me to such an extent that I actually called on quite a number of the "dear circle," with a view of investigating its truth, and finally had little difficulty in tracing it to those "swift-winged messengers" of the ———, those indefatigable bringers of tidings—the highly-mercurial and never-too-highly-esteemed family of ———! Visiting their abode, which, you may remember, is located, like those of the old-time gossipers, near the "Market Place," I discovered that the tale originated with myself. Some chance remark which I had made, to the effect that I thought the monetary revulsion might induce father to come home and look into things, had been gradually elongated and passed along until it assumed the above positive form. I went home a sadder and wiser man—mentally resolving that Shakspeare should have said, instead of "Rumor"—

"Enter ———, painted full of tongues."

. . . . I notice in an extract from what I think must be an excellent critique, that a writer in the "Westminster" says just what I wrote you about "Aurora Leigh," viz. that it is, *primarily*, a novel in verse—*incidentally*, a poem. What a sweet thing, by the way, are those lines of her's—"*He giveth His beloved sleep!*"

If I were not afraid you would accuse me of dainty trifling, I would occasionally copy for you some *little* poem of my own. You must bear in mind that I am not able or willing to copy weightier efforts, and indeed have few in a finished state. It is only *lyric* trifles that I *can* send in a trans-Atlantic letter, and such sort of things, to be good, must be highly finished—like a cabinet picture. Here is something, now:

THE SINGER

Sweet lark!
Where learn you all your minstrelsy?
What are those realms to which you fly?
While robins feed their young from morn till dark,
You soar on high:—
What is there in the sky?

Dear child!
Above the clouds I lift my wing
To hear the bells of Heaven ring;
Some of their music, though my flights be wild,
To Earth I bring!
Then let me soar and sing!

Dec. 13, 1857.

CHAPTER VII

A BROWNSTONE UTOPIA

1858–1860

In the year 1858, what is now the Borough of Manhattan was then a city of something over half a million inhabitants; the upper part of the island of Manhattan was divided between the villages of Yorkville and Harlem; and the Borough of the Bronx, across the Harlem River, had not yet progressed beyond the stage of farming land. Madison Square was the limit of the northerly advance of well-to-do people: some of the old families still lingered around Bowling Green, and the Astors were living in Astor Place, on the corner of Lafayette Place. The Academy of Music was located at the corner of Fourteenth Street and Irving Place, and below that, stretching down Broadway to the City Hall Park, were the principal theaters, hotels, and the few clubs then known to New York.

Literature had not developed much beyond the stage, where only a few years earlier, it was thought a marvel that the *New England Magazine* and the *North American Review* should pay their contributors a dollar a page, and the frugal Executive Committee of the *Boston Standard* decided that a payment to James Russell Lowell of $4.80 for a weekly contribution was much too extravagant,—this at the time when Lowell was writing the "Biglow Papers." The price paid for newspaper work in New York did not admit of any extravagance on the part of the gentlemen of the press. One of the attempts of a group of thinkers in that day to secure even a reasonable comfort for their families, without exceeding the limitations of their incomes, was a scheme for a coöperative home for people of active and congenial minds, inspired by Stephen Pearl Andrews and carried out by Edward F. Underhill, one of the attachés of the New York *Tribune*. The first modest quarters of Mr. Underhill's "Unitary Home" were on Stuyvesant Place: the venture proved so successful that in a short while he engaged four brown stone houses on East Fourteenth Street, and, with a gala dinner, opened the real Unitary Home.

The spring of 1858 had brought gloom to the little household on Nineteenth Street. An inconsiderate burglar made a wary entrance on the night of February 11, and took away the few pieces of silver of which the family might boast, leaving, as a token of good-will, the plated silver broken in pieces. This seemed a presaging of trouble. Reverses in business followed, and, in March, Stedman found it necessary to let their prettily furnished home. The Stedmans boarded with the new proprietor for a while, but this did not prove satisfactory, and was soon abandoned.

In the course of the preceding months, and of those to follow, Stedman resorted to various ways of making ends meet. As he was inexperienced, and had no capital, his adventures in mercantile pursuits had been unsuccessful. A note dated 1858, on a faded envelop, reads: "The within bill with interest I was bound to pay and have worked six months to raise the wherewithal. A great load is now off my mind."

He had associated himself more closely with Mr. Ellis, aiding him in his law practice; then he took the position of Corresponding Clerk with the Delaware Lackawanna & Western Railroad Company. There is a story connected with this experience which Mr. Stedman delighted to relate: On one occasion, when the Treasurer of the Railroad Company was making up his annual statement, young Stedman was drafted as clerk for a temporary service in the Financial Department of the Company. Finding that he could not make a stubborn cash account agree with the count of the money on hand, he contributed two cents out of his own pocket to make up the difference. Asked shortly afterward by the Cashier as to his work, Stedman reported, with much self-satisfaction, his easy way of making the accounts of a great corporation agree. "Confound you, Stedman," answered the Cashier, "we have had the whole force of our office at work for several days to find that two cents."

Stedman shrank from accepting any second-class literary position, nor would he barter his Muse for any mess of pottage; as he was unable to secure the positions he wished, he continued in business. Tom Harland, at one time Commissioner of Internal Revenue, his friend since boyhood, and his college chum, occasionally came down from Norwich to visit Stedman for a chat, or for a game of chess; and many literary projects, in which he desired his old and brilliant friend to participate, buzzed in Mr. Stedman's head; but for one reason or another these schemes were not carried out. Edward Underhill's movement was also a constant and earnest topic, and when his coöperative establishment opened on Fourteenth Street, Harland was installed as its manager. The Unitary Home seemed the solution of the troubles confronting Mr. and Mrs. Stedman; as the young father later wrote: "I still had not emerged from the boyish sense of injustice in my childhood, and the spirit of what I now plainly see was Revolt against the methods and environment of my exile in Norwich.

"Then, too, since my having learned to unlearn from Harland, I had read a good deal of Fourier; and there is no training, to reason down a dynastic change of that sort, like a practical subjection to the underside of an established order of things. Between that, and my loneliness, the impossibility of making acquaintances of my own kind, and the shrinkage in our resources, I suspect, impelled us most of all to the scheme of coöperation. It is true, once there, the humor of it struck me, else I should not have written such lines as these:

"'And if a host together fall
What need of any cash at all.'"

Within the year of his death, Mr. Stedman made for his contemplated *Reminiscences* the following notes portraying the life at the Unitary Home, where, with the exception of the summer holidays passed at a brother-colony, he and his family lived from the fall of 1858 until the spring of 1860.

"One episode of the early conflict with our environment in crowded 'Mannahatta' is so clear in memory, and so divided from experiences before and after,—so apart, moreover, from that established order of things out of which we had drifted, and back to which we anon returned,—that I can set it in a frame by itself, to reinforce such claims as it may possess to a share of modern interest.

"Our entrance upon it was as transmigratory as if we suddenly had stepped into that fourth-dimensioned space, which doubtless was as much about us then as when afterwards discovered by the algebraists. The change would have seemed even more strange and temerarious had we not been of the age which knows no temerity, and of a rustic innocence to which nothing is strange, or, rather, all things are equally strange because equally untested. The respite it afforded from perplexities to which our ventures already had brought us might well keep its memories from dying out. I think, too, that the time itself was of an unforgetable cast; no after period, for young or old, could more reasonably be called distinctive than the one wherewith our outsettings were coeval. The Civil War was its culmination, and what later stage can have wrought upon the lives of our children, or our children's children, as that wrought upon our own?

"My story has to do with social not political exigencies, and with an interval, just preceding that fierce Olympiad, when visions were beheld, and the questioning spirit was abroad. Antislavery agitation, temperance reform, woman's rights, spiritualism [1]—with Andrew Jackson Davis as chief seer,—were debated in field, kitchen, and country store: workmen began to coöperate, students were romanticized, every shoemaker on his bench or tailor on his board was some sort of a philosopher. Government land-warrants lent persuasion to Greeley's adjuration—*Go West.* 'Voices' were not only in the woods, but under the roofs of the town. The visions were phantasmal, but their mist was luminous; the voices were not ancestral, yet prophetic after their kind, and alluring to undeterminate youth.

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[1] In the winter of 1857–1858, Stedman "happened to be in with the very beginnings of spiritualism," and some interest in the subject remained with him throughout his life. He was also drawn into making a single test with hasheesh

"John Bunyan's vistas of the heavenward journey were vouchsafed to him when, as he walked through the wilderness of this world, he lighted upon a certain place where was a den, and laid him down in that place to sleep, and as he slept he dreamed a dream. To us the Utopian commonwealth we chanced upon was no Bedford Gaol; it seemed rather, despite a severe outward conformity, a hospitable refuge from the maze in which we found ourselves, and the year and half a year of our tarry there comes back to me as a dream within a dream.

"We were by no means 'clothed in rags,' though for some time my secret cry, like that of Bunyan's man with a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back, had been *What shall I do?* Probably my burden was not that of my sins, yet all the heavier for my ignorance of the world, and for my headstrong folly in taking my sweetheart by the hand, and persuading her to strut out from the Happy Valley, both of us under age, a decade before our wiser guardians would have permitted us to do so. We were parents, yet still in childhood; had gone thus far upon the provisions we brought with us, but now these were gone, and I had not learned how to recruit our store. I could better have borne the weight of much sinful ingathering than this of anxiety for those whom I had sworn not only to love, but to cherish, and to protect. It was easy now to see the meaning of the

vividly described in a long letter to his friend Thomas Harland. "I never could bring myself to try it again," he would say, in after years, "not even for an instant could I again let my soul pass from my control."

omen of our wedding ring slipping to the floor in our morning nuptials, in Norwich, the first ever consecrated by the young clergyman who wedded us, in the little wayside church—the first rites of the kind there celebrated, for it was built during our courtship.

"At this moment, forty years and more later, with the city more overcrowded than ever, there are thousands of young adventurers even as we were,—yet let them take heart. To understand how vastly more remedial are their difficulties than were ours, recall the conditions which we were forced to confront. It is hard for the youth, or the incomer, to understand that the economy milesian has not always been as now. It is the lifelong citizen here who is now most bewildered by the skyscraper, the unusual apartment palaces, the transit system, all consequent upon the elevator invention, the steel frame, the third rail. His children take all this as normal and matter of course; just as ourselves, when children, took the railroad and steamboat, then still novel to *our* seniors. Let Tristram and Iseult fairly get into their minds that in the fifties and sixties there was not a single 'flat,' cheap or dear, existing on Manhattan Island; there were only filthy and despised tenement houses for the poor and criminal classes.

"The bed-rock of our foundation was Economy through coöperation. This much of Fourier's social philosophy, must stand or fall with twentieth-century 'collectivism.' The Household's working method was adjusted to James Warren's formular—Cost the Limit of Price. Weekly expenses, large or small, were inflexibly levied upon the associates. Neither the chief, Mr. Underhill, with his professional industry and earnings, nor his actuary, Mr. Harland, whose intellect dominated the establishment, could have met any important deficit. As I recall the system, the aggregate weekly rent was apportioned among the various apartments. The rooms, in suites or single, occupied for private use, being taxed first according to cubic space and location, and of course on a scale, lessening with each story upward, that dated when town-dwellers knew 'how hard it is to climb.' The balance of the gross rent was assessed upon the communal parlors, dining-room, kitchen, and rooms for employees; and, of course, was assumed by the Household at large. Reasonable charges for use of furniture were paid by tenants failing to supply their own; conversely, if a newcomer brought more 'traps' than he needed, the surplusage could be leased to the management, and the owner paid for its use. In this manner, as I remember with satisfaction, our own weekly outgo was sensibly reduced. We were not only tenants, but *lessors*, and therewithal added many luxuries to our fare. Near the end of our coöperative experience, our luck not yet having mended, we were glad to dispose altogether of certain appurtenances. A pretentious chamber-set tided us over for a month, and I think it required at least a fortnight to exhaust the proceeds of a sideboard for which, as all omens indicated, it would be long before we could have any need. Just then it pleased Fortune to relax her testing strain, and before these sumptuary reserves were quite exhausted I found my opportunities broadening; but even if the last of those possessions had been given up, our case,—although we did not foresee it thus,—would not have been much the worse, since the great war was so soon to bear us, and thousands like us, hither and thither in such wise that the most treasured chattels were to become mere impedimenta.

"The Unitary scheme called for no profit on rent, food, service. The management, though hostile to forestalling and accumulation, cheapened supplies by purchasing in quantity, and, under the low Democratic tariff then existing, obtained foreign wines and cigars at rates that now would tempt the most abstemious to fall by the wayside. Meals were supplied *à la carte*—on what was then termed 'the European plan'—and I have some memoranda of the range of prices. These were supposed to be for the best food cooked in the best manner, notwithstanding that a dish of soup cost but two cents, and one of fish but four or five; and that the charge for roasts was from five to seven cents a plate, and for *entremets* but four. One chose his vegetables for three or four cents the portion, with special rates for such luxuries as fresh peas and asparagus. The average dessert or sweets cost three cents; coffee, tea, and chocolate, two cents a cup; and, lastly, bread and butter were each supplied in exchange for the least valuable coin of the Republic. It can be deduced from this schedule that a banquet of five courses could be enjoyed for thirty cents, without subjecting the partaker to the humiliation which such a rating denotes, in modern badinage; that half this outlay would serve for breakfast or luncheon, and that clarets, beer, and ales were almost proportionately within means.

"The account answerable for the residual maintenance of our hostelry was classed as General Expense, and its weekly rise or fall was as scrupulously bulletined as, nowadays, the weekly bank-reserve, or the 'cost of living' computed by the public statisticians. It was estimated by deducting from the gross outlay of the management the amounts paid weekly by the inmates for rent and food. The balance, consisting of sums charged for rent of the parlors, refectory, kitchen, servants' wage and board, for all light, heat, and equipment of such public rooms, and the rent of vacant apartments, was assessed in as many equal shares as there were resident coöperators—two children or private servants being counted as one unit. As in every social organization, malcontents were not lacking. The average individual share of General Expense varied from $1.75 to $2.25 per week; the nearer the lower limit, the more content; at a point above $2., murmuring; at $2.25, revolt. In exigencies, any further outlay must have been carried over to the next week, for only by some such exercise could the management have staved off a revolution.

"Thus one recalls the exiguous details of an early struggle for subsistence, while of the revenue expended in later years memory, as of time, takes no note, but from its loss. A newspaper letter of that period asserts that the Utopians were thus enabled to live 'with full hotel accommodations, on the most expensive street crossing the town, in the most convenient quarter, at an average weekly cost of five dollars apiece.' It adds, 'Were it not for the extravagant and unavoidable rent paid for the four brown-stone fronts, $7500., the economy would be much greater. As it is, nowhere in the city can the same luxuries be procured for the same price.' During our own stay in this city of refuge, I am sure we thought the quoted declaration within the bounds. Unsophisticated as we were, the occupancy of our three large rooms, (from front to rear of the best floor of one of the 'four brown-stones'), made handsome with our choicest furnishings, seemed quite like 'full hotel accommodations,' but much more independent,—for 'individual sovereignty' was another maxim of the establishment: there could be no intrusion upon one's privacy, nor was there any obligation to frequent the common parlors, or to form entangling acquaintanceship with fellow tenants.

"From the first, I think we were recognized as desirable, if somewhat alien, and a certain exclusiveness was in fact, if not in our thought, or intention. But as our apartments were more effective in hangings and furnishment than our friends of the management were in the habit of showing those inspecting the Household with a view to residency, we accorded them this privilege not without complacency. At slight expense we had, when desired, the luxury of private meals and service. In fine, we and our two[1] little ones and maid, and my brother in his bachelor-room at the rear, were snugly sheltered, and our combined expenditure, above the credit for our surplus furniture, varied little from twenty-five dollars a week, scarcely more I fancy, than half what would have been demanded for such accommodations elsewhere. What they now would cost must be reckoned in consideration of quadrupled salaries of newspaper men, and receipts of successful authors, seemingly unlimited.

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[1] Their second son, Arthur Griffin Stedman, was born at the Unitary Home, June 6, 1859.

"I suspect that the inmates beguiled their leisure hours very much as in other communities, birds of a feather flocking together, each according to his kind. For my part, I consorted with the newspaper men and bookmen, and amateur poets, and doctors. We drank beer, read Tennyson and Kingsley, and the new science. The public parlors, very much as hotel parlors for visitors and recreation, occupied the main floors of the middle houses. Twice a week, on Wednesday and Saturday evenings, there were refined dance-receptions which for many were exhilarating occasions. A street minstrel-band, consisting of an aged harper, and two violinists, and a cello, regularly supplied the music at a moderate charge. It was a pretty sight; the cotillion, the caledonian, schottische, polka, and waltz prevailing. The music was less sophisticated than now, but much of it was Italian, suggesting moonlight, love, and flowers. There were as many romances, and jealousies, as elsewhere: I remember one yellow-silked dame coming in wrathfully, seizing her husband literally by the ear, and thus pulling him into the hall; and I also remember that she herself had made him just as absurdly jealous. It was a maxim of our Fourierian rites that there are no evil passions; that all passions, like Kentucky whiskey, are good; that when we call them evil, they are simply good passions perverted, or reversed, that hate is inverted friendship, for example, and jealousy love in excess.

"These terpsichorean merry-meetings distinctly lightened the weeks' burdens, and, though never taking part, I heard the viol and bassoon with pleasure. If I had joined this company it would have troubled the repose of my own wife and sweetheart, for, by some instinct, which does cling to women rather than to men, it was not in her to affiliate with the unknown. She kept her rooms, and though perfectly unoffending, some natures never intruded on hers. If there were any lions, she was Una. She never heard discussions on dangerous points, nor would she have understood them. She did not pronounce judgment upon our fellow-boarders, but was perfectly content with the peace and comfort of our rooms.

"Birds of strange plumage flitted from oversea to our aviary; some of them finding its perches comfortable for a while. There was the Irish writer—Edward Maturin, whom I regarded with much interest, for was he not a son of the Charles R. Maturin, that clerical author of 'Melmoth, The Wanderer,' a conjuring novel of the super-romantic period, but long since out of print, and now known to very few modern readers. By means of an American copy, in one of the old-time Harper reprints in cambric covers, I had absorbed in youth the wondrous tale of an Irish 'Faust's' futile attempts to induce friend, sweetheart, even some condemned malefactor, to follow his example. It was written in the belief that no one, under any circumstances, would barter away his soul. The Franklin Square fire destroyed the Harper reprint, and I never have seen a copy of it but the one still kept by General Harland, of Norwich, on the shelf to which I returned it in the forties.

"Sometimes I have queried whether it would repay a modern publisher to reissue this most fantastic, and almost the last, production of the Monk Lewis school of romance. Its author, besides other fiction, wrote 'Bertram,' a high-wrought tragedy on a kindred theme, which one suspects impelled Byron, in 1817, to the composition of 'Manfred.' At all events, 'Bertram' was eulogized by both Scott and Byron, and through the influence of the latter had been brought out, with much success, at Drury Lane in 1816. A mystic fascination invested this dark stranger, the younger Maturin, himself a poet, scholar and novelist, the son of a bizarre genius, but endowed with that half-faculty often possessed by the offspring of parents to whom the divine fire has been given on the one side only. He had come to the States, fresh from Trinity College, Dublin, twenty years before, with vouchers from Tom Moore, and was for a time a Greek professor in South Carolina; thence coming to New York and publishing here, and in Boston, quite a string of romances. Among his books were 'Montezuma, the Last of the Aztecs,' and a volume of lyrics. Maturin afterwards settled down in New York as an instructor of Greek and Latin, and died a score or more of years ago.

"Another Maverick—one upon whom America showed no avidity to place a brand—was the then noted 'Father Achilli,' an apostate monk who abjured the Church at about the same time that John Henry Newman entered its fold. His tractate upon the Restoration of the Catholic hierarchy in England, which he termed 'the Papal aggression,' brought about a violent agitation. He was a demagogue through and through, but such was the public excitement that the great Newman delivered his famous Lectures, in the course of which he exposed Achilli's moral turpitude, and incidentally brought himself under suit for criminal libel. An English jury, though clearing him on most of the counts, mulcted him for £100. The expenses of his defence, aggregating £14,000., were defrayed by subscription throughout the Catholic world. I fancy that Achilli had fallen into disrepute or obscurity, and had come to mend his fortunes—and to us in the temper of an Adullamite. Gray-haired he was, and moody, with few who sought him out. New York, soon to deserve its nickname of Greater Dublin, was not a promising field for Anti-Papal campaigns by a renegade; although Dr. Murray, as 'Kirwan,' had but recently gained celebrity by his controversy with Archbishop Hughes.

"A permanent boarder, for whom I had much esteem, was a sturdy, cheery Yorkshireman, whose mishaps, as a London publisher with a personal bent for literature, had not served to dishearten. Barring his puns, he was a most lovable fellow. Sometimes I lunched with him and other Britons in an upper chamber of the Nassau Street chop-house, where these exiles lingered, in disregard of business pressure, to drink their ale and reiterate mouldy stories. To a stay-at-home it all seemed quite foreign and Pickwickian. Mr. H. Markinfield Addey had brought out his books with more taste than profit. I still cherish his gift of two charming little volumes, now very scarce, illustrated by Birket Foster, Wahnert, Weir, and others; one of them, the Hannay edition of Poe's Poems, with the Preface which so missed the spirit of Stoddard's 'Miserrimus,' and started the wrong notion of the younger poet's animosity to his early master; the other, a companion volume of the poems of Goldsmith. Addey & Company, of Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, went to the wall, after issuing costly editions of Doré; and my friend had come hither for a fresh start, threatened with loss of sight, and seeking 'surcease of sorrow' for the death of a wife who had been most dear to him. He was fertile in ideas, and soon found aid to project a comic-weekly, entitled *Momus*. Although *Vanity Fair* was then in its hopeful stage, our people displayed no relish for a rival closely modelled after *Punch*, and edited by its projector, whose ideas of humor were markedly exotic. It had the services of a well-known *Punch* cartoonist who, with Doyle, had withdrawn from that sheet by reason of its campaign against the Catholic Church in England and Ireland.

"Through the talk and companionship of these men, I came a little in touch with the workaday life of Londoners in that mid-Victorian day. A few of us vainly tried to Americanize *Momus* with our jejune quips and quirks, but it soon went the way of the stream, and Mr. Addey—with that zest in which these English wanderers outvie us—tried his hand in other directions, for a time unsuccessfully. At last, when totally blind and dependent upon a youth as guide and scribe, he, of all men, created a business above the clouds; establishing a successful White Mountain newspaper for tourists and resorters, which was issued from the top of Mount Washington. This, in its way, was a heroic exploit. If my old friend is still living, which I much doubt, he must be an octogenarian.

"Other foreigners there were, who only came and went, and whose differentiating characteristics, if such they had, were less apparent. But I scarcely recall one of the maturer American frequenters of the Household, who could be termed conventional, unless it were Charles Wentworth Upham, long pastor of the First Church in Salem, Mass., afterwards a publicist and historian, and incidentally President of his State Senate, and a member of Congress. Work upon his standard history of Salem Witchcraft may have given him a special interest in 'Spiritualism,' of which not a few votaries were then to be seen and heard at his chosen place of lodgment. He was nearing sixty then, and his presence was thought to confer a cachet upon the house. In one's acquaintance with reformers the consideration shown to academic sojourners, and the value set upon association with them, has an interesting side. But, as intimated, provincial notabilities who came our way, usually stood for specialized nonconformities.

"Two of them won the titles of Elder, but their sects were as divergent as wine and water. I well remember Elder Frederick W. Evans of that gentle, deeply-religious sisterhood and brotherhood, the Shakers of Lebanon. He was a friend, if not a kinsman, of Thomas Ainge Devyr, long a Williamsburgh editor and politician, whose home several of us often visited, sure of congenial talk and gracious offices of good cheer, extended by his wife and children. Among the latter was the now saintly and beloved 'Sister Cecilia' of Lebanon, a poet and a compiler of lyrics; another fair young girl, with whom my wife and I formed a lifelong friendship, is now widely known to lovers of poetry as Mary Ainge De Vere,[1] and as 'Madeline Bridges' in the lighter prose of the day. The home of the De Veres, after all these years, is still across the East River, and is the spot most cherished by Seumas MacManus in his thoughts of, and visits to, this country.

"Our other visiting Elder was the sturdy John H. Noyes, the jovial, full-bearded head of the Oneida Community, well known to various members, and considered, despite his 'Perfectionist' views, to be possessed of the business faculty and sagacity that commanded recognition. There seems no reason why these two leaders should have put up at the same place, or should be named in the same narrative, except their common success in the economic management of idyllic communities: the Shakers within the law, but forbearing usage—the Oneidans averse from both. The ultimate break-up of the Oneida colony, as in many settlements, was apparently due to the younger generation's refusal to 'continue the business.' The toleration extended by the Grand Jury and Tithing-men, not without appreciation of successful business thrift, both in New York and in the Land of steady habits, was due to the same appreciation of successful thrift in that delightful summing-up of estimate by the county farmers: 'They do say that in spite of his queer notions he has accumulated considabul' property.'

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[1] Miss Mary Ainge De Vere writes: "The name *Devyr* is pronounced *De Vere*. My sisters and I were sent to a young ladies' boarding-school, where my sisters got the idea of spelling the name as it is pronounced. My father was only amused—he should not have permitted it."

"Besides the always changing tide of married and single humanity constituting the mainstay of the Household, and of just the average pursuits and ideas to be found in a boarding-house, there was a group of about our own age and interests, with which I associated, glad at last to meet anybody who even touched the fringe of whatever literary life—be it Grub Street or Union Square—which might be in New York at that time. Mr. Underhill, one of our set, was a masterly stenographer, and as such at the top of the *Tribune* city staff, though not such a scholar as his two chief colleagues, Wilbour, sketch-writer, and Mortimer Thompson, 'Doesticks.' The latter two I often saw, and was impressed by the individuality of their apparel. Mr. Wilbour, especially, approved invariably long black rich hair, and Elizabethan-Milton wide collars worn over his coat. In his way, an æsthete, but not greatly differing from Lowell, in his earlier days, as shown in Page's portrait of him. During the Civil War, it will be recalled, Wilbour made the rapid-transit version of *Les Misérables*, which Carleton issued, and which earned for him a 'brown-stone front.' Several of us worked for and under him. I myself at Carleton's request, made versions of the ballads—but the press was too fast for me. Of these the best: 'Jean Prouvaire's Song at the Barricade' was afterwards used for the beautiful edition issued, with all the original French illustrations, by Routledge. But this is a side-story, as neither Wilbour nor Thompson resided in the Household. Underhill was a great legal stenographer, and often had a corps of assistants working at night in his suite of rooms.

"His wife was a handsome black-haired country girl. Her close friend and kinswoman was the fair-haired wife of Leonard A. Hendricks, then, and for 40 years after, contented to be a reporter on the *Herald*. Hendricks was a Yale man, who had failed to graduate, nor did I suppose that he cared for his degree. But as recently as 1900, I have been one of his few surviving friends who supported his successful request for restoration to his class (1850) and for the honorary degree of M. A.; receiving which, the quaint old boy sung his *nunc dimittis*, and turned his face to the wall. Nothing could ever induce him to leave the *Herald*, or essay a grade above reportership. He had measured his limitations, and was void of ambition; he was much in love with his blonde-wife, whom he had rescued from a worthless former husband, and his devotion to their crippled boy was very beautiful. We best knew these couples, Harland, and a few well-born thoroughbred cadets of New England and New York—for example, the Perkinses, of Lynn.

"Of these, my dear friend and physician, Roger Griswold Perkins, did not reside with his brothers at the Household, but was foremost among the younger disciples of Hahnemann, and associated with Dr. Bayard, the head of that school in town. I never have known a handsomer, more eloquent, enthusiastic comrade; he died young, and—as I am mentioning his younger brothers—I pay this brief mention for my own sake, not for that of the reader. His next brother, also our friend, Maurice Perkins, of similar characteristics, was then a member of the Stock Exchange—to please a rich uncle. But his tastes were scholarly and scientific, and he applied himself to chemistry to such effect that he resigned the prospect of wealth, threw up his membership, and secured a post as Professor at Union College, remaining there until he died.

"The third and youngest brother was a natural writer, and we thought he would shine as such; his inclinations were poetic, and he knew Owen Meredith by heart. But finally he thought it not worth the effort, went back to his native village, married, and settled down to a life, of which he is still in possession, of sage philosophy, enlivened, I have no doubt, by acquaintance with the Art Colony at the mouth of the Connecticut River. There was also Alfred C. Hills, city editor of the *Evening Post*, who quickly became my firm ally and friend: tall, dark, aboriginal, a countryman, of course, from New York; and a pure specimen of the native humorist. A man of the highest principles, and patriotic, and swift to enlist for the war, where he served as Lieutenant, Captain and Major. Finally, there was the great Congdon—our *grand Condé*.

"Many there be left, who remember Charles Taber Congdon, in his closing days at the *Times*, though but a few are still living who were with him, then somewhat past his prime, after the war which terminated the necessity for the great dynamic end of his career: the sarcastic, Homeric, scathing, classic, yet slangy, series of *leaders* that were *his* contribution to the frensic and scriptural pioneers which preceded the Northern side of the camping, preliminary to the clash of arms. Besides these, there were his scholarly, jesting leaders on the social matters of the day. There was none like Congdon—no, not one. After years of work, including at the start, that verdant booklet of verse, 'Flowers' 1840, weaker than Pendennis could have written, he brought the art of writing a leader to its acme. What bolts he launched, tipped with fire, and showery sparks of laughter, against the bigots, the figure-heads, the pretenders—most of all, just then, against the old guard of the patriarchal defence. Dr. Lord, of Dartmouth, who had the dull banality to put forth the Hebraic 'Cursed be Canaan,' was a battered target. What mock Congdon made of the Bell-Everett and Low-Whig convention, just before the great war! He depicted the co-diluvian wiseacres, in session on a mound, not yet reached by the rising waters, passing resolutions deprecatory of the rain, and appointing officers to put an end to it—sitting and voting with umbrellas over their heads, until the meeting was dissolved 'by natural causes'; and the delgates disappeared, ever to rise above the waves, until the session for the nomination of the Bell-Everett ticket in 1860.

"Years later, when some of us believed that these polemics should be gathered into covers, how strangely ineffective these great leaders seemed at least to me. They were like Emerson's 'sea-born treasures,' so delicate, which he fetched home, only to find they

> 'Had left their beauty on the shore
> With the sun and the sand and the wild uproar.'

Such, I think, will be found the fate of most newspaper matter, unless written with one eye to the immediate effect, and the other to its relation to ultimate collection.

"At this time Mr. Congdon led the life of a hermit, in a small room high-up, with few books except some classic texts; and his seclusion was rarely invaded, except by Underhill, one of whose anxieties was that of seeing to him after his recovery from periodical moods, and insuring his being up to his work in sudden exigencies of the office which they both served. Congdon was then most striking, swarthy as an Indian, with a mien and hair of the Rufus Choate type, or perhaps answering to our notions of Mirabeau,—at times a slumbering Hercules, flashing fury when aroused. After a quarter century on the *Tribune*—he was one of two or three that went elsewhere—he grew gray and placid, dying in his seventieth year.

"Our upper floors were occupied by single men, reporters, clerks, transients. All in all, there was a coterie of 'Slaves of the Lamp,' as William North called them, and many were the devices some of them used to meet their weekly outlays. They were free-lances, news gatherers, or when items fell short, *making news*, and selling it as best they could. In those days, outside the editorial page, the foreman of the *Herald* office slapped in what he chose. There was plenty of space for full reports of speeches at political meetings, and Cooper Institute—where the larger ones were then held—was temptingly near for our bohemian free-lances to take down the 'outside speeches,' on the chance of selling column matter to one of the newspapers. One evening I remember that a couple of our boys had obtained the news of the credited orators, but failed to 'take' their outgivings, whereupon Hill and Hendricks mounted boxes in the former's room, as spell-men, and improvised enough eloquence to fill a couple of columns, which greatly to the surprise of my ingenuous mind, was sold to the *Herald*, and appeared therein a few hours afterwards, doubtless, much to the perplexity of the orators purporting to have delivered it.

"There were no painters nor sculptors, that I recall, at the Unitary; but of the children of song, a few, who readily found their way there from the Academy of Music, which nearly faced us, and which brought us into exhilarating contiguity, night after night, with the glare and din, the chariots and horsemen, the fair and brave, of the town's *crême de la crême*. The nearness of the Academy, and the reasonableness of its charges in that halcyon day, made the Unitary Home an enviable vantage-ground.

"The opera oftenest repeated there, as doubtless abroad, was *Il Trovatore*, and still, after 50 years, I hear it on the street organs and in the Café. But for us then, 'the glittering horse-shoe curved between.' For a dollar a seat, we could sit in the orchestra, unenvious of the orchestra-circle fashionables who made the house beauteous for us with their larger outlay and resplendent attire, and listen to

Grand Opera to our soul's content. Having satiated ourselves with the theatre—Wallack's, Laura Keene's, Niblo's, Burton's, for the earlier years of our town-life, I remember that the Opera now became our delight, to the exclusion of all other artistic delectations. We certainly made it a point to see, more than once, every opera produced during our stay at the Unitary Home. Looking back it is now of record that it was one of the best periods of Italian music ever presented here; beside the regular Company, the troupes that there performed for occasional periods, after their return from New Orleans, or from Havana, were as trained to work together as any subsidized stock company abroad, and first and last we saw the world's best artists.

"For myself, I think the Italian opera was well calculated to evoke the emotions, and give pleasure to youth, and I do not regret my course of it before our acquaintance with the intellectual and symphonic German school began with *Tannhaüser*. The elementary, terrestrial, subjective passion of the limited Italian strains, with their melody and dying fall, who can forget their sway; more celestial than the divine melodies, the sublime dramatic imagination of the epic *Norma* and *Semeramide*. It was the day of *Lucia*, *La Favorita*, *Lucrezia*, *Don Giovanni*, *I Vespri Siciliani*, *I Puritani*, *Don Pasquale*, and the like: preëminently of *Il Trovatore*, then so new, and *Martha*. We were all loyal to La Grange, steadfast, unfailing in the varied rôles of a prima donna—a good sure voice and actress, yet her name is now barely recorded; Adelaide Phillips; Mlle. Piccolomini; the homely, but dramatic, D'Angri; and Formes, the magnificent and prodigal great basso. But Brignoli was our favorite tenor. Heavy, lumbering, undramatic schoolboy he might be; but that voice of his, with an individual quality, like that of a veiled flute, everyone yielded to its charm, as he sang in *Don Pasquale*, or in *La Traviata;* best of all in *Il Trovatore*. Owen Meredith could keep his Mario aboard, soothing damned souls in Purgatory, as for us Brignoli's *non ti scordar di me*. was quite enough. Then Amodio, with his huge, gluttonous bulk and waddle, there was no question as to *his* voice or action. He was our connecting intermediary with the opera, for he took up lodgings in the Household, on the English basement floor, with the lady then known as Signora Amodio; and the house delighted to know that the pair cooked their own meals, five of which per diem, as on a Peninsula Steamer, were required to stay the appetite of our Gargantuan baritone.

"Though neither my purse nor the will of my companion were propitious for our joint departure from our third story snuggery, oftener than the opening of some new opera, I, in common with the rank and file of our masculinity, had the Enchanted Land at my command nightly, for the small outlay of twenty-five cents. That was the charge for admission, in garb as careless as we chose, to the topmost of the galleries, very close under the roof, and often very suffocating in those pre-electric nights. It was rare that some contingent did not scale the four flights of stairs to that eminence—where the music was so clear and the air so bad—and thus take in at least the most important act, or acts, of our favorite operas. Foreigners were there galore, many with scores in their hands, and most of them in that day, I think, were Germans: at least one would judge so from the fact that a counter was to be found, at the South East end of the amphitheatre, almost at the edge of the proscenium sky. Here flowed copiously the Lager Bier, which, since its introduction to this town with the incipient Teutonic invasion, had been for a decade growing steadily in fashion. Æstheticism was not then upon us, or possibly the conjunction of Italian melody and bier would have jarred our sensitive souls.

"To the outside conformist there doubtless seemed no pre-eminence of strangeness among the zealots of our household. All who were not there simply for the advantage of fare and shelter must have been classed as presumptively abnormal, carrying in their bonnets each his own bee, yet quite alike in their unlikeness to the general. But that there is distinction even among eccentrics was well understood by the Unitarians themselves, just as in a sanitarium some one inmate is looked upon as having special claims. This rank was allotted by common voice to Dr. Benoni (as I will here call him) from the day when he first installed himself in the most economical single-room on the top floor of the establishment. Above all others, this well-born Israelite, a scion of one of the old Portuguese families in a seaboard Southern State, was predestined to be with us by natural selection. He had studied much in France, was a 'born' scholar, and certainly a man of curious learning. Before coming of age, he had been fascinated by the tenets of Fourier and the 'passional analogy' of Toussenel. Returning home, he took possession of a small patrimony, upon which he well might have lived according to his modest needs. But so simple and confiding was his belief in the welcome which his propaganda would receive, that he risked his every dollar in the issue,—by the New York publishing-house then concerning itself with the literature of 'ologies and 'isms,—of eight or ten books, chiefly compilations and translations, which he prepared with incredible rapidity. Not one of these having a paying sale, he was taken aback to find himself at his wit's end for subsistence. Meantime though an advanced theorist, he failed to inspire confidence as a medical practitioner. For the rest,

> 'too proud to importune,
> He had not the method of making a fortune.'

It was hard to guess how he lived along during the few years in which I knew him, otherwise than by the occasional sale of some of his books to the friendly, or to the curious.

"To his stay-at-home countrymen of that peroid, Dr. Benoni's personality seemed of an exceptional type. Short, thin to emaciation, with long black locks shading his swart and sallow face, and with piercing eyes that shone excitedly, as he pointed a gaunt finger to emphasize his discourse, he answered to the traditions of the wandering Salathiel, and was one who might now be thought, but for his manifest lack of guile, an offshoot of the tribe of Svengali. That he was a gentleman, a scholar, an enthusiast, there was no doubt. For one, I conceived a respect for him, and even an attachment, although when I seized my rare chance to go down the Bay for recreation, he insisted upon accompanying me and reading aloud from his treatise on 'malaria.' This was in support of some theory, decades earlier than our acquaintance with the mosquito, and of it all I remember only its closing statement—'Salt marshes are not malarious.' This I was inclined to dispute, having lived on the edge of saline Jersey meadows; but he put the question by, and declared that he would disembark with me, since a man should vary his diet by eating 'the fruits of the ocean.' I was driven to change my plan for an absence over Sunday, and to offer him a share of those fruits at a beach-supper, whereupon his approbation of the shell-fish set before us so depleted my purse that I humbly paid his fare, and my own, back to town that very night.

"Poor fellow! he was in a chronic state of anæmia for lack of sustenance. He lived in the spirit; but it told upon his corporeal frame. Having occasion one morning to mount to his room, I found him boiling chocolate in his shaving-cup for breakfast, and this, he assured me, was a nutritious and all-sufficient early meal. His bed was covered with little piles of manuscript, and the draught from the open door strewed many leaves of this foreign paper around the room. I can see him now, cup in hand, with infinite care and patience, picking them from the floor.

"On the day of his first arrival, he sent down to Mr. Underhill a formal list of stipulations, numbered serially. There were twelve in all, but I recall only two of them, namely, demands that the chambermaid of his room should be replaced by one who was not red-haired, and that his poker should not have a malefic brass handle. Dr. Benoni was temperamentally as well as by diploma, a homeopathist, and recognized no merely mechanical process whatsoever.

Of the slightest taint he was in constant fear, but I am sure he would not have confessed to injury by a collision or run-over. In his communism he went to the logical extremes, with a poetic faith in the elective affinities, and in passional analogy as the law of the universe. But he was an inoffensive citizen, chaste to asceticism, a worshipper of the eternal feminine, chivalrous, and courteous in discourse.

"To certain of the illuminati in and without our battlements the Household took on a mundane, almost cosmic, preëminence as the temporary citadel of the Pantarchy. Very much as the primitive converts must have revered the mystic cave of Mount —— or the later House of Islam, tentative retreats of the Prophet, so in the eyes of these esoteric few our abode gained distinction from the sojourn of a Pantarch. Nothing less than a planetary autocracy was assumed by that eccentric and diversely studious projector, Stephen Pearl Andrews, and yet undeniably with as much inherent right, could he have maintained it, as that of many an historic dynast.

"Mr. Andrews, a native of the 'old colony,' was then in his mental prime, and nearing fifty, but much study had told upon his health, and he had been apparently booked for a swift decline, when his pulmonary ailment yielded to the devoted ministrations of a lady, who shortly afterward became his second wife, and to whose care and skill he probably was indebted for his after life, prolonged for more than a quarter century. He had been known as a pioneer in philology, and was full of curious knowledge of law, philosophy, and social science; and now, dissatisfied with the general outcome of civilization, he had devised the Pantarchy, upon a formula applicable to the solar system but naturally restricted to our own globe, with himself as the pivotal Pope, or Pantarch. To scholarly ears the word translates itself, and here let one reflect that one very good ground for an affirmative reply to the question 'Shall we still teach Greek?' is, that of the scores of thousands of words added to our English vocabulary since that time, by far the largest contingent is made up of those derived or compounded from 'the undying antique speech.'

"The Pantarchical scheme not only coördinated all races and nations, but provided mortals with methods of work, achievement, recreation, as specific as those of Fourier, and designed for immediate utilization. The town at large had a momentary and quite inadequate glimpse of an experiment in one of its departments, the class or 'Order' of 'Recreation.' About the date of the founding of the initial Unitary Household, in Stuyvesant Place, a loft, in the nature of a hall, had been secured in the uppermost story of the Broadway building which bore, as I remember, the fateful number, 555. Here the sons and daughters of the Pantarchy for a time foregathered weekly; and at the nominal admission fee of a dime, innocently refreshed themselves with converse, cards, and waltzing; doubtless also, I conceive, with some proselyting interest on the part of the leaders, since the attendance at this inoffensive Club was not confined to the elect, but included friends and the curiously-disposed who found their way thereto. A philosophical young lawyer, destined in after years to become a high official at Washington, and the practical creator of the Internal Revenue code, acted as the Club's doorkeeper, and by virtue of an intimacy with him I participated once or twice in its diversions, and took no harm.

"But little old New York was smaller and younger then, and jealous of thought or action seemingly at variance with the customs of its founders, or of their successors under Saint Tammany. For the advocates of any 'cause' or reform whatsoever, it had not the slightest use or discrimination; all were classed as long-haired men and short-haired women; a meeting in behalf of temperance, or women's rights, was often provocative of some onslaught by the rabble, and the Abolitionists—as a politically obnoxious faction—took their lives in their hands when Garrison and other leaders came to address them. The dreaded Marshall Rynders, a blatherskite coward and bully, of the Jonathan

Wild pattern, even invaded their meetings with his band of legal ruffians, and drove the speakers from their platform under the pretense of repressing disorder.

"It was not surprising, then, when some queries as to the nature of the gatherings at No. 555 crept into the newspapers, that hints of a strange and unhallowed propaganda soon became rife. Then came an evening when a squad of the newly organized police demanded and gained admission to the progressive recreation hall, scattered its votaries, and incidentally, and most unjustly, bore off my friend, the doorkeeper, and several of his chief associates, to the grim fastness of the Tombs, where they passed a discomfiting night. Though set free next morning by the magistrate, before whom they were arraigned, their plight supplied a good and derisive story for the city press. I think that they could not have been sufficiently possessed of the martyr spirit to brave the repetition of this experience, since from that time the Order of Recreation suspended the exercise of its functions in that upper loft on Broadway.

"It may be that both the philology and the phonography of Mr. Andrews were elementary, considered from our advanced point of view, but he deserves honor as an early promoter of the science, and of the art as well. His mind was of the restless, speculative order. In height, spareness, vital persistence, he was not unlike his fellow New Englander, Cyrus W. Field, the cable-layer and first successful installer of our elevated railways. I do not know that he devised the first Universal Language,—there probably were European experimenters before him,—but the invention of 'Alwato' was his, and its claims were ardently presented by him to the lay and the learned worlds. It is not clear why the word 'Alwato' should not be found in the chief American dictionaries, which do include 'Volapuk,' since the first-named tongue can boast a greater antiquity than its immediate successor, and equals it in arbitrariness. As the Pantarch designed his language for the intercommunication of all peoples East and West, he was above the empiricism of narrowing it to an Indo-European basis. And now the facile Esperanto, provoking memories of the hog-Latin of our schoolboy days, flaunts its banner above the graves of both.

"In the course of our domestication at the Household, its actuary, the high-browed young lawyer just mentioned, whom we had thought immune, through his quality as a Thinking Machine, to the sentiment that sways the common world, succumbed to the fresh and vivacious beauty of Mr. Andrews's stepdaughter. The romance of their wedding proved auspicious through many after years of wedded life. Their second son—to whom it was my privilege to assume the relation of godfather—though not his sponsor in baptism—bore from infancy the mark of genius. In time he was to become eminent, both here and in England, in fact a leader among younger writers of tales of beauty and imagination.

"'In Summer, when the days were long,' even as now, those who could afford it, strove to keep the bloom on their wives' cheeks, and to preserve their *Kinder*, by a change to country air, but not for far. Still, what are now the suburbs, then were safely distant from the outlying squalor of the town. For myself, Monmouth County seemed Paradisaically remote, accessible only by the steamboat which made daily trips down the Bay, and up the Shrewsbury and Naversink Rivers to Redbank, laden on the return voyages with many vegetables for Washington Market, and with fruits—strawberries, other berries, peaches, melons—which in succession from June to September the Monmouth truck-farms yielded.

"The berry plots of Strawberry Farms were a delight to the eye, divided by cords into lanes for the pickers—maids and mothers with baskets at their girdles; in the edges grass-covered crates half-filled under the cool trees, to be borne to market before the morrow morn. All this was pleasant to us from the 'frozen North'—so much so that two years later when in the capital, between the letters of a war-correspondence, I wrote an 'Idyl of the Civil War,' the story was, after all, little but a cloth of white, red and black on which to paint the idyllic fields and creeks of Monmouth County, the lurid strife in Virginia. 'Alice' herself was drawn from one of the maidens of Strawberry Farms, soon thereafter married, and still living in the serene fullness of her years, in the same spot. This very year I have visited the spot, in fulfillment of half a life-time intention. There is no change, except new tenants—and its simple accessibility by rail to Lakewood. During the early years of the War, it furnished a safe retreat for my brood, while I was at the front—and there my lady Mother passed a happy month with us, seeing me for the first time since her departure for Europe, twelve years before, when I was a College Freshman, and fresh from Court life finding a piquant interest in this Arcadian New Jersey.

"There was a current of affinity always 'live' between the Household and The Phalanx—as the buildings and fields formerly held by the 'North American Phalanx,' four miles from Redbank, by a sandy road—was then called. So it was natural that my family with others took refuge in this idyllic spot. (During our intimacy there, Mr. Warren, who kept the boarding-house, and still survives, [1910], wished to give it a more enticing name; and many councils were held, Strawberry Farms being finally chosen, as true to fact and sentiment.) The North American Phalanx itself had wound up its affairs years before, discouraged by the burning of its chief building, filled with stores, etc., at a time when it was still struggling with a mortgage debt dating from its foundation through a prospectus issued by Greeley, Brisbane and others, inviting the formation of such organizations. After twelve years of what otherwise was a very happy, bucolic, communistic life, it was thought best to dissolve the community. This was done, and a return made of fifty-seven and one third per cent to stockholders of their original investment.

"While much of the land went to aliens, the home-lot of the general buildings and grounds, and the greater part of the best land adjoining, was secured and occupied by Phalansterians and their families—a charming, fair-minded, moral, and industrious neighborhood. The great main building remained, a portion of it divided into compartments for families, the rest for those who like us came to board under James Warren's auspices. Our dining-room had been the great community hall of the Phalansterians, and smacked alluringly of the past; with its dais at one end, of which the reredos was a grand and unique painting, the imaginary representation of Fourier's ideal Phalanstery, the city of a 1000 souls. On the dais was a hand-organ-piano, which supplied the music for evening dancing for the summer visitors. The building, long and low, faced pleasantly a great lawn, sloping down to a miniature lake, formed by damming the perennial stream that ran through the tract. This pretty sheet of water, bordered by trees, and the plenteous groves near by, were the trysting-places and Academes of the folk drawn to this modern Eden by natural attraction.

"When we migrated to the Phalanx, Dr. Benoni went also, like the ghost in Tennyson's 'Walking to the Mail,' and was happy in the fields and gardens, and an ardent botanizer throughout our whole domain.

"It was pleasant to see Miss Mattie Griffith a beautiful Kentucky girl, whose love of the good and kind had led her to emancipate her inherited slaves, and made her the heroine of our community, escorted daily to a shaded seat, at the lake's edge, by her two rival admirers: one, the diminutive and swarthy Dr. Benoni, the other, Arthur Young, the stalwart gray-haired Scot, son of the historic reformer of that time, and himself a progressive enthusiast. Though she listened with coquettish patience to the manuscripts of Benoni, and to the philosophy of Young, neither of them advanced further in her regard, for in after years she gave her hand to a Mr. Brown, and set up her home in Boston.

"It was Dr. Benoni who most distinctly added to the gayety of us all. It was his wont, an afternoon thunder-storm coming on, to emerge from an entry of the long cottage row, upon whose vine-clad verandah sat the lady-boarders with their books and gossip,—even as their richer sisterhood were sitting at the same hour on the statelier piazzas of Saratoga,—to come forth clad only in undershirt and cotton trousers, flapping his emaciated arms like the wings of a plucked fowl, to pause half-way down the lawn's slope, and to receive the full force of the torrential rainfall, a vitalizing process, in his belief, which imparted to him electrical energy straight from the Empyrean. I remember the buckets which he filled each morning from a spring of exceptional purity, and placed before the hour of rising at the doors of certain ladies.

"But to make the shadow actually go back on the dial, his great panacea was the earth-bath. If he forbore to prescribe this to our women-folk, all the more insistently he urged every male-guest to follow the example of Antæus. That he had the courage of his convictions was revealed on the day when a bevy of children and nurses fled in consternation from the wood-lot near by, avowing that they had come upon an earth-hole with a naked man in it. Some of us went back on their course, and there indeed visible above ground, were the pallid face and elfish locks of Dr. Benoni, with his body much at home in the hole, wherein he sat reading a book opened against the ridge of soil thrown up by him.

"All this I can vouch for; but only through the testimony of the more roysterous youths of our Arcadian colony—few, if any, of whom still live to proffer it—could I verify the legend of the Doctor and the Tinsmith. There assuredly was a philosophic artisan in tin who visited the Farms of a Sunday, and with whom the Doctor had many conferences. Dr. Benoni, so the rumor went, had long been convinced that he and all of us vitiated our systems by conforming to the raiment of a defective civilization; that the emanations retained by modern garments were deleterious to a high degree. It was asserted by George Arnold and his set that for several weeks the Doctor had made a daily pilgrimage of four miles to the back-shop of his friend, the Tinsmith, and that in due time a box was consigned from Red Bank to the former's room at the Farms; furthermore, that one morning, when our Savant as usual rose at sunrise, a weird clanking was heard as he passed downstairs and out the door; and that certain of the field hands were afterwards astonished by meeting him clad in shining panoply, as if a Knight of Cornwall; and that thereupon he confided to them that all the smith's skill had failed to articulate rightly the knee and elbow joints of his hygienic armor, and that his meagre form was already excoriated and bleeding. A compassionate laborer then went to the house and obtained his conventional and, for the moment, indispensable attire.

"If not exactly this, something equally Quixotic and unsuccessful, occurred after our return from the Phalanx, and was the Doctor's crowning discomfiture. He did not reclaim his airy quarters at the Unitary, but faded away, not so completely as the Cheshire Cat, for he left not one, but many smiles behind. Afterwards we saw him once, when he visited my mother's lodgings, on her return from Italy, with fates so palpably against him that she insisted upon paying for the volumes, which he formerly had presented to her with gallant and poetic inscriptions. There was later news of his departure for his native South close upon the outbreak of the War, and of his service as a surgeon on the Confederate side; and in time there was ground for the belief that his share in the effort to bring about the golden year had ended prematurely with his ingenuous life. In such case, none who knew this learned Scientist, this supplicant of Nature and his fellow men, could forbear to trust that he speedily found that kindred shade to whom he had thus tenderly dedicated a translation of Toussenel's 'Spirit of the Beasts of France': '*Dying like Adonis in the flush of early manhood, you hardly knew, my Cousin, how well I loved you. . . . Wherever thou art, I know thou dost preserve a zest for all that is rich and rare, so I send this to greet thee in the spirit Hunting Grounds.*'

"At the Phalanx our wives and children stayed the summer months through; and on Sundays, even as now, welcomed us to the winsome seclusion of the Farms. With the apartments and cottages well filled; the families of the cultured resident farmers, and the young journalists, who came down on Sundays, these were happy days. George Arnold, the poet, and his brother John, born and bred at the Phalanx, came with their Pfaffian friends, and many were the pleasant jests and bouts the crew initiated. One of them to be remembered was the mock duel put up on a little Anglo-Welsh painter, also a song-composer, who had fallen desperately in love with a pretty and young daughter of one of the thriving settlers—cousins of the Arnolds. John Arnold affected maliciously to be a rival for her hand, and managed so to insult Mr. B——— that we told him his honor required satisfaction. A challenge was promptly sent, and, in the grove, ground was measured by the Seconds in traditional style. The Seconds took care that the pistols should be, like Tom Moore's, leadless, but with the first shot, the little challenger's blood was up, and he demanded another. The shooting would have continued until sundown, if we had not persuaded Arnold to make an abject apology, and peace was declared with Applejack, the wine of that county."

CHAPTER VIII

THE DIAMOND WEDDING

1859

"DUELS just then were in the air," Mr. Stedman continues, "owing somewhat to a lightsome affair in which, it must be confessed, I myself was a protagonist, and which it was long before I knew whether it brought me more weal or woe. The story of *The Diamond Wedding* has been retold in at least every decade since an event which old New Yorkers—not the same crop of old New Yorkers who were figure-heads in those days,—with pity or reverence for their tedious tales—still refer to, and told in so many differing ways that, especially as it was one of the most public episodes in the life of the Unitary Household, I often have promised, after sufficient time should have passed, to narrate veraciously. Why should I not do so, instead of leaving it to others to mutilate the metrical *jeu d'esprit* still retained in my own volumes at the behest of the lady, who years after the smoke and nonsense cleared away, learned that, after all, I was her 'poet-laureate.'

"It was not so many years later that even the sending of a challenge became a misdemeanor in this State, and such society swash-bucklers had to flee to escape punishment."

(Shortly before his death, Mr. Stedman made the following draft of the subject which entitles this chapter, intending to embellish these notes for his *Reminiscences.* In his manuscript, the letters used were given only in paraphrase: Mr. Stedman's modest version has been replaced by the original letters. Extracts from his poem have also been inserted.)

In the autumn of 1859, just preceding the War, our society, "best" and otherwise, had attained a point of efflorescence at which it began to crystallize, and to shed, and desire to shed, something of its lustre beyond the borders of what was then beginning to be termed the metropolis. Saratoga, and measurably Long Branch, and Newport, were its outlying summer posts. It had begun naturally, to attract the attention of satirists, who weighed it with more reason than in the provincial days of that first fashion writer, Willis; and, inevitably, it attracted the smart young Bohemians, who knew of it only by report, and by observation of its more obvious functions and episodes. Curtis had touched up the ambitions of Mrs. Potiphar and the cambric-edged hylotheism of the Reverend Cream Cheese. Later, William Allen Butler had animadverted on what was the feminine extravagance of those days, with his satire on Miss McFlimsey of Madison Square, and the deficiencies of her wardrobe, and therefore her trials in maintaining the standard of a Madison Square belle. This poem had an immediate success, and in book form, with drawings by Hoppin, started the vogue of Rudd & Carleton, publishers. Doubtless, but for the sudden conflict, which drew away from frivolities, and soon put society itself into robes of horror, "our best society" would have marched swiftly to more conspicuousness and expenditures. After a few years, the war itself bred a totally new and pretentious class of fashionables—a champagne aristocracy composed of the families of parvenu contractors, speculators successful in the Stock Market and the Gold Room, whose opera boxes, yachts, trotters, and clothes, were for all the world to see.

But little enough we of the Household knew, or cared to know, of the select New Yorkers, whose equipages were establishing a Rotten Row in the beauteous new Central Park, and whose Master of Ceremony was the fat and famous Brown, Sexton of Grace Church. In October, 1859, came a fashionable event, the most notable and soul-stirring that up to that date had ever marked the progress of cis-Atlantic. What one journal called "the gilded glories of the Diamond Wedding" are still referred to, and even now would rank with the first class, when such events are not uncommon. But the cause then of their assuming both civil and even national importance, was, doubtless, because the occasion was the first one whose princely cost, and outlay, had moved the press, not without satisfaction of those "consenting unto" the match, to record the material details which before had been reserved for the parties concerned.

O Love! Love! Love! what times were those,
Long ere the age of belles and beaux
And Brussels lace and silken hose,
When, in the green Arcadian close,
You married Psyche, under the rose,
  With only the grass for bedding!
Heart to heart, and hand in hand,
You followed Nature's sweet command—
Roaming lovingly through the land,
  Nor sighed for a Diamond Wedding.

So have we read, in classic Ovid,
How Hero watched for her beloved,
  Impassioned youth, Leander.
She was the fairest of the fair,
And wrapt him round with her golden hair,
Whenever he landed cold and bare,
With nothing to eat and nothing to wear
  And wetter than any gander;
For Love was Love, and better than money;
The slyer the theft, the sweeter the honey;
And kissing was clover, all the world over
  Wherever Cupid might wander.

A Cuban of good family, among the richest on the island, in the Autumn of life, Marquis Don Estaban de Santa Cruz de Oviedo, had fallen in love with a beautiful girl, Miss Frances Amelia Bartlett, still in her teens; and, after a romantic courtship, had secured the promise of her hand, and the very marked approval of her father, an ex-Lieutenant of the Navy.

one Summer's day,
The King of the Cubans strolled this way,—
King January's his name, they say,—
And fell in love with the Princess May,
  The reigning belle of Manhattan;

. . . .

No, he was no such charlatan—
Count de Hoboken Flash-in-the-pan,

Full of gasconade and bravado,
But a regular, rich Don Rataplan
Santa Claus de la Muscovado
Señor Grandissimo Bastinado!
His was the rental of half Havana
And all Matanzas; and Santo Ana,
Rich as he was, could hardly hold
A candle to light the mines of gold
Our Cuban owned, choke-full of diggers;
And broad plantations, that, in round figures,
Were stocked with at least five thousand niggers!

The Bartletts lived in West Fourteenth Street, and the proud bride—tall, willowy, blonde, resembling Eugénie, then the world's cynosure—was perhaps New York's chief ideal of youth, beauty, and esprit. In his contentment, the bridegroom bore all the expense of the wedding, and lavished on his choice such treasures as took away the breath of society and the public. The sumptuous outlay of toilettes, gems, etcetera, added such profits to the great merchants and jewellers of the day, that, through the enthusiasm of the parents, the advertising interest of the tradesmen, and finally the aroused attention of the reporters, the most esoteric, as well as the most casual, schedules of the trousseau of the lady were chronicled day by day in the press.

Ten to one, and I'll go it alone,
Those most used to a rag and bone,
Though here on earth they labor and groan,
Will stand it best, as they wade abreast
  To the other side of Jordan.

So public and social excitement grew until the day of the wedding, which was to take place in the old Cathedral in the East side of the town, and penetrated even to the minds of us humble proletarians, and the unfashionables of *East* Fourteenth Street.

If the bride had been older, or the groom not three times her age, and a foreigner, or the resources of the two families more equal, possibly the enviously disposed would not have voted the affair a mercenary sale, and would even have condoned what seemed the want of taste and delicacy. As it was, it was not strange that some one should have practically applied by example the horrors which

Butler not long before had at least intimated in "Nothing to Wear." At all events on the day after the wedding, with all its noise, and crush, in church and street, I was talking of it with an office-mate, and some lines, which might serve for the key-note of a satire came into my head, and I said: A lively satire in verse, could be written on all this. "Go and write it now," said my friend Ellis, who had reproached me for so long hiding what he believed to be my light under a bushel. He was so positive, that I actually went to my quarters in the Unitary Home, and that afternoon, while my wife and children were in the room, worked away at *The Diamond Wedding*, and finished its two hundred and eighteen lines before midnight. This speed was due to the fact that without thought, I had broken straight into the Hood metre of Miss Kilmansegg, the best in the language for such a use, and the easiest to write, for by its own flexibility and momentum, it carries the subject and the fancy right along. I remember playing with my child between the strophes, to let down steam, and get ready for the next effort.

When it was done, it had to be read that very night to some of our group of newspaper men, and all said as some to Bunyan—"John, print it!" This was on a Thursday. Even the cynical Harland said, like Washington, "That's not bad, young un." Hendricks wanted it to go to the *Herald*, and Hills to the *Post*, but Underhill was so enthusiastic that he incontinently took charge of the manuscript, for the *Tribune*, and, Mr. Dana being out of town, submitted it to Mr. England, the city editor and his chief, as soon as they met on Friday. I was ingenuously surprised at the fuss made over it, as I considered it a mass of rhymes, quite below my aim and standard. In short, I had not the least conception of its exact suitability to the purpose of a newspaper "hit." (Neither, though modestly bred, had I the least thought of indelicacy in touching in light rhymes upon what the principal factors concerned had seen heralded daily for a month, or that it would gain more enemies than the caustic press editorials. I was at that happy period of obscurity, from which the editorship of Connecticut papers of course had not lifted me beyond state recognition; when I was not careful of name, obliged to live up to no reputation; and in that buoyant spirit of youth that has much audacity, and too little consideration for the feeling of others. Probably, I did not think of the effects at all, certainly not of publication over my own name. It has been many years since I first learned to gain no mirth nor prestige at the cost of pain to others, no matter how open to reproof or satire they may expose themselves.)

Mr. England and Mr. Underhill knew their business. On Saturday A. M. the 18th of October, I had the mingled surprise and satisfaction of seeing "The Diamond Wedding" occupy more than a column of the *Tribune*, with my name at the head as having written it for that newspaper. It transpired that England, with a city editor's instinct, had seen the potentialities of the metrical screed, and, in Mr. Dana's absence, had taken the responsibility of inserting it with my name in full, as aforesaid, under the title.

The poem took at once. It was reprinted in all the weekly and tri-weekly issues of the *Tribune* and on the afternoon of its appearance, in the evening papers. In fact, as I went out in the afternoon, I was startled by a huge signboard in front of the then young *Brentano's*, opposite the New York Hotel, on Broadway, corner Waverley Place:

"Read Stedman's great Poem on the Diamond Wedding in this Evening's *Express*."

This shedding of initials and the use of a scare-head confused me so much that I beat a quick retreat to my home, sincerely hoping the thing would blow over. For I was at the age, then, of what may justly be termed "juvenescent literary priggery"; feeling within me abilities as yet unknown to the world, and, I fear, holding myself quite above the workaday honest standards of the laboring brothers-in-arms of Grub Street and Nassau Street. Were those lyrics and idyls which I had been writing, keyed to the note, and reminiscent of Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, and above all, Tennyson, my master who had drawn the best from all, and of whom I knew I was one of the few adherents, worshipping him afar off—were the joy and fame of these pieces, in the realms of high art, to be subordinate to the mere notoriety so strikingly aroused by the production of a newspaper skit, so easy for me to write, and so utterly out of my desire? Yet, I accepted the envious plaudits of our newspaper set, and slept well enough, unknowing that the worst was yet to come.

It had not occurred to me that the Bartletts, after the glory of the nuptials had culminated the long heralding and prolegomenon of what had led up to it, and after their apparent complacent acceptance of the white light shed upon it by the press, would look upon my lightsome rhymes, as—so the *Herald*, with whose editor and his wife they were on terms, called them,— the "last straw that broke the camel's back." Therefore, I was amazed the next day to receive a letter, through a Captain F. C. Adams, late of the army, written on the previous evening, and demanding to know if I was the person referred to, and if the "article in verse" so entitled *was* written and published by me? My previous journalistic training showed me that the barometer was falling, and put me on my guard. "Never to destroy a letter" was easy, but "never to write one" in this emergency seemed impossible. But I am sure that from the moment Captain Adams, a pleasant and courtly gentleman under some embarrassment, handed me this query, I felt that I must not write a line that would not stand the fire of ultimate publication; and I knew by instinct that the gentleman addressing me was of the choleric and restricted class who would not consider this at all. Here, I had an advantage, in inverse ratio with our respective ages. It was perhaps mean to avail myself of it, nor would I have done so in after years; but if all my worldly wisdom could save me under the handicapping of the odds against me in years, position, and natural resources, perhaps such a beggar as I was could hardly be blamed for exercising it. So I simply did the one safe thing, not going one iota outside the preliminaries, which I felt them to be, and wrote a Spartan note off-hand, the Retort Courteous (but kept a copy):

106 East Fourteenth Street,
October 19, 1859.

Capt. Washington A. Bartlett,
Sir:

Your note of the 18th inst. has been handed me by your friend, Mr. F. C. Adams. In reply, I would say that I am the Edmund C. Stedman referred to in your letter, and the author of a poem called "The Diamond Wedding," published in yesterday's *Tribune*.

I have the honor to be

Your obedient servant,
Edmund C. Stedman.

On the next day, as I now had reason to expect, Captain Adams called again, under still greater embarrassment, perhaps equalized by my consideration upon the fact that I, a humble civilian, of tender years, found myself upon doubtful ground with an ex-

Lieutenant of the U. S. N., and a late Captain in the U. S. A. He bore a letter not at all in pursuance of Touchstone's series of the degrees of a quarrel; long, and to the effect that I had been guilty of a gross libel, falsehood, licentious allusions, etc., ending by saying that I could only atone by "prompt and adequate satisfaction"; that his friend, Mr. Adams, was "fully authorized to act" for him. Accompanying this, was the following extraordinary document, which the friend, with much awkwardness, said that his principal demanded that I should sign.

> I, Edmund C. Stedman of New York, having admitted to Washington A. Bartlett, Esq., as per my note of Oct. 19th inst. that "I am the Edmund C. Stedman referred to in your (his) letter, and the author of a Poem called "The Diamond Wedding," published in yesterday's *Tribune;* (18th Oct. inst.), do hereby declare that I publicly recall said "Poem" from circulation, and hereby forbid its republication, declaring that said "Poem" in all that relates to Mr. and Mrs. Bartlett, Mr. de Oviedo and his bride, to be an entire perversion of the *facts* of the case, and utterly unworthy to have been written or published by me at any time or place, and much more of parties whom I do not know personally, and who have not in any manner conducted themselves as related by me in that "Poem."
>
> I therefore make this public recantation of said "Poem," and apologize to Capt. Bartlett and Señor de Oviedo, and their families for all allusions to them, and to the public for having written and published said "Poem."

The latter gentleman at the time, was presumably on his honeymoon, well content to leave his honor in the hands of his father-in-law.

It was too much to expect a chap in his twenties to take this placidly, however keen his sense of the ridiculous. The author was so nettled that without reflection on the sin of the then still living, though moribund, code, he jumped at once, to the "Reproof Valiant," omitting Touchstone's "Quip Modest" and "Reply Churlish." In short, I assured Captain Adams, as he was leaving with some precipitation, that his friend should have no delay in receiving a reply from me, the moment I could secure a friend myself to wait upon him, and I wrote a vigorous answer on the spur of the moment.

106 East 14th Street.
Wednesday Eve. Oct. 20th [1859].

Sir,

I have this afternoon received, through Mr. Adams, your note of yesterday evening, together with a remarkable document drawn up by yourself for my signature.

I do not know whether to be more indignant at the unjust charges contained in the former, or at your expectation that any man, under any circumstances, could affix his name to a paper absurd and degrading beyond precedent.

In an ordinary case, the reception of such a letter would preclude an answer on my part, but I have a word to say in denial of your several allegations.

Instead of being a gross libel upon you or your family, "*The Diamond Wedding*" is simply a satirical Poem, published in a reputable journal, showing the humorous side of events, which have been both town and newspaper-talk for an entire season.

The facts therein set forth are taken directly from the public journals, where they have been alleged over and over again, without denial on the part of yourself or friends.

I furthermore claim that, whatever may be the merits of the poem in question, there is not a line in it, which any pure mind would deem "licentious in vulgar description." Nor has it been thus construed by a Public—who have so long, in common with myself, been familiar with the most sacred and private details of the courtship, dress, presents, etc. attendant upon the marriage lately celebrated in your family, that they feel, as I did, almost personally acquainted with every member thereof.

If this reply is severe, you have only to censure yourself for addressing me in a manner unfitting the occasion or its cause.

Were I in the wrong, you have placed it out of my power to offer amends. Let me, however, distinctly say that in no event could I have retracted what seems to me, and to others, a humorous, not uncalled-for criticism of one of the principal public events of the day. . . . I am

Your obedient servant
EDMUND C. STEDMAN.

WASHINGTON A. BARTLETT, ESQ.
39 WEST 14TH STREET.

It was plainly time for me to consult with my few friends, a literary body-guard, more formidable, as it proved, than an army with banners. Great was the mingled hilarity and wrath at the Household that evening, and great was the approval of my treatment thus far of the deposition of the Muse of Comedy. The consensus of opinion was my choice of Hills, both a humorist, an editor and a man of affairs, as my friend in this emergency. He joyfully consented to "stand by," and thereupon my letter was enlarged by the statement that my friend Mr. A. C. Hills "was authorized to act for me," and would "wait upon Mr. F. C. Adams with this note," and Mr. Hills did so wait and deliver the letter on the next morning. The Household was in delightful expectancy, and many bets were made on the outcome. Meantime Penelope embroidered her web, and tended the little Telemachus, unwitting of the perils besetting Odysseus, yet curious as to the cause of the evident excitement pervading the air. But at that stage such serene confidence in the ability of her husband to carry through any emergency was still extended to me, as never ingenuous country girl gave her swain. All life here was yet a wonder life, and no one thing more than another was the unexpected. Whether I was or not, at least she was in the happiest period of her womanly life.

The next development, so astonishing to us, made the way clear for admitting her and others into the mystery. Without delay, as Hills informed the Junta that evening, Mr. Adams had reported to him that he had seen his principal, and found that—whether or no in consequence of my Reproof Valiant—he was now contemplating "legal proceedings"; that he had informed him that if such was his intention, he, Adams, must wash his hands of the matter and have no more to do with it. Mr. Bartlett had replied that he did not consider me his equal socially, and could not give me the honor of meeting him.

Now followed vigorous and disdainful rejoinder by Mr. Hills, with hearty approval of Captain Adams's conduct; much interchange of pedigrees and connections on both sides; another note from Lieutenant Bartlett, informing me of a coming criminal prosecution for libel, which Mr. Hills declined to receive and to deliver, and withdrawal of Captain Adams; letter to Mr. Hills from Lieutenant Bartlett, closing "I stand upon my rights and the law"; much exultation of the Junta, and champagne drunk instead of the usual bier, in celebration of the vindication of the liberty of unlicensed printing, and the majesty of the "maker's" craft.

But it was learned that Captain Bartlett had indeed put his affairs into the hands of his counsel, the famous James W. Gerard, the wittiest and most sagacious of New York lawyers; that he had laid it before the District Attorney, besides arranging to bring action for exemplary damages, and that there was a probability of a speedy presentment against the author of the offending article in verse. The Junta unanimously voted that a counter-blow must be given, and all the facts and correspondence, thus far, must appear in the press. This naturally proved to be the opinion of the enterprising city-editor England, and his chief, Mr. Dana, and in fact the whole affair did so appear, "exclusively," in the *Tribune* of October 24, 1859, and is there on record. I have still by me, yellow with age, all the manuscript letters, before and after, of the Bartlett-Stedman imbroglio. Simultaneously, with the resolve to issue these as our ripost, came the thought of an appeal to the great Congdon. His aid would be as much as that of Rochambeau's fleet and army in the crisis of the war for Independence.

With Hills and Harland I ascended to the fourth floor, and happily found Mr. Congdon sleeping off the lassitude, which in his case usually overtook him after a Sunday. We made bold to rouse the sleeping Polypheme, who lay there with gloriously tousled head, nothing in his room, beside his cot, table, washstand, a Burton's Anatomy, a Greek text, and a copy of the Constitution. We roused him, and after he had dipped his head in the washbowl, he wished to know, in resounding tones—"What the d——l have you young gamins broken in for?" When the whole affair gradually became clear to him, he roared like a Titan, swore and laughed. As he had courted such a theme for one of the cynical leaders which must be his daily toll, it was not he to resist. Besides, he had a kindly heart, a pride in journalism, and his protecting ægis was over us.

After more ablutions, and a "bracer," he got himself into shape, rolled downstairs, and made for the corner of Nassau and Spruce. With the issue containing the account by Hills of the whole business, with its display-heads,—not then given the name of "scare"—appeared on the editorial page Congdon's unique brevier exegesis on the subject, such an article as only he could write, warming up to a degree of satire and eloquence, besides which the juvenescent mirth and moral of the original poem were as moonlight is to sunlight, and as water to high-proof New England rum.

But one effect was possible. Although much later correspondence between Messrs. Hills and Adams, explaining the position and views of each, subsequently was called, keeping up the public interest, nothing could modify the effect of this first revelation from behind the scenes. The newspapers and country went daft over it, and I can now see how utterly unequal the odds were in my favor, and although I did not realize it then, now feel a compunction for having used our strength "like a giant." All sorts of rehashes, and humorous, or indignant, editorials appeared in every state. The poem and its author had a reception far beyond their merits; and a vogue immeasurably greater than the poem itself had gained. I was glad that the wedded pair were on their way to the pearl of the Antilles.

The first effect was that the absurd side of the matter appealed so forcibly to Mr. Gerard's gift of humor that he withdrew; nor was the expected indictment made by the Grand Jury, although the *Herald*, as the Jenkins of the day, gave support to the opposing party. So far as I discovered, not another paper throughout the land but took my side, and as for the *Herald*, its managing editor, in that week, directed Mr. Hendricks to ask me to confer with him as to my entering the employment of that paper—the first voluntary offer of newspaper, or of any work, that I had ever received, and which would at last have been an alleviation of our anxieties; but I was destined for the *Tribune*.

There was a pleasant aftermath to *The Diamond Wedding*, which Mr. Stedman embodies in a letter written in May, 1906:

Secretary Philip Corell
Union Coast Guard

DEAR SIR:

I sincerely appreciate the hearty invitation—extended to me at the suggestion of our distinguished friend, your Comrade Shurtleff—to attend the coming Reunion of the 99th N. Y. Volunteers. It is with regret that I find myself unable to be present at this gathering, in which I could not fail to be deeply interested.

To meet the surviving veterans of the Naval Brigade would give me vivid memories of "far off things, and battles long ago"—that is, of the battle years at the outset of which your organization was effected for a specific service in the national defence. It was through the fact of being myself an early participant, at Washington, in the preparations for those fateful years that I was somewhat cognizant of the origin of your now historic corps. Colonel Washington A. Bartlett,—the man to whose plan, inspired by patriotic ardor, the 99th Volunteers, as I suppose, owed their formation, was, as I knew him, a former Lieutenant in the U. S. Navy. It may have been due to his previous service on the Pacific coast, that the need of a trained body of skilled men for the defence of our then almost unprotected harbors, and for the handling of heavy artillery in fort and field, so quickly impressed him.

But I never have been more surprised than when Lieutenant Bartlett sent to me, in Washington, such a letter of introduction that I instantly responded by calling upon him at his hotel. For, he and I had then very recently been involved—owing to a light metrical satire from my careless pen—in a newspaper scrimmage which had both its serious and its humorous sides. I can see Mr. Bartlett now, as he held out his hand, and said, "Mr. Stedman, in a time of public grief, private differences may well be forgotten." To this I readily agreed, feeling some compunction at having put to discomfort this patriotic, if rather choleric, ex-officer, eager to fight for his country in the winter of his years. The outcome of it was, as you remind me, that the next morning I did accompany him to the White House, and secured for him an immediate presentation of his design to Mr. Lincoln. I quite forget what was said, but it is evident that the President liked the visitor's project, for he referred him favorably to both the War and Navy Departments, and Colonel Bartlett—securing, I think, his State Commission, was authorized to recruit the Naval Brigade under the auspices of the United States Government. He expected to enlist a large body of men. My recollection is that he went to the front, in his eagerness, with less than the thousand that were his minimum limit, and was ordered, first of all into garrison at the Rip Raps, off Fortress Monroe, for the discipline and instruction of your forces. Nothing could have been more pathetic than the almost immediate loss of its zealous old Colonel, fatally injured by a fall while going his rounds, and brought to New York to die.

It almost seemed to me as if it had been predestined that such a youngster as I should be mixed up—as in some Arabian Nights prediction—with your progenitor's last days, and that even the effort to promote, in some slight way, his career, should hasten its untimely end. His daughter—as you doubtless are aware—still survives, retaining the stately beauty and vivacious intellect which made her then so notable at home and abroad. Though my little tilt with Colonel Bartlett related to her memorable "Diamond Wedding," she has long deigned to enroll me, and others of my household, upon the list of her personal friends.

All this talk may serve to show why your call to a reunion of the Naval Brigade should bring back to me those thoughts of youth which, as the poet of our own time sang, are "long, long thoughts" in age. I beg to join in your toast to the memory of those gone before, and when your next anniversary swings round, may the glass prove not to have been a stirrup-cup for any comrade of you all!

Cordially yours,
Edmund C. Stedman.

To return to 1859: the day after Stedman wrote his satire, he sent the following letter to his mother:

Room 29, Moffat's Building, 335 Broadway.
Ellis & Stedman

New York, October 19, 1859.

. . . .

During the past Summer I have been in Monmouth County, New Jersey with Laura and the children; once more, for the first time in years, among the woods and waters. The vacation was absolutely necessary for my life, as I was entirely broken down, and again bleeding at the lungs. Of course I spent every cent I had in the world, and am now just building up my income again, and unusually busy. Have been engaged all the Summer in writing. It is impossible for me to specify what or how I am doing; you may hear of me, or you may not.

I may say, though, that after having for years refused every chance of obtaining a second-rate reputation, though often sorely tempted by poverty, etc., and having kept myself out of second-rate literary circles, in the faith that I would yet have an opportunity to take a first-class position,—my faith begins to be sure of its reward, and of late my literary progress and connections have commenced to be sure and profitable.

I live from hand to mouth; as yet can lay up nothing; sickness consuming so much of my time. Have one great consolation—Laura, Freddy and Arthur compose the fattest, healthiest trio, I ever saw in my life.

Uncle William sent for me yesterday and offered very generously to pay my expenses to Europe, and those of my family during my absence. I declined the offer, conscientiously, on the ground that I was just building up my business again, and an absence of six months would only return me penniless—without connections; secondly, and to me, far more important, I just begin to see the prize of years of patience and determination within my reach, and from the nature of my position with the *literati* of the *Tribune*, etc., begin to feel warranted in striking for a public reputation, which, if my lungs last a few years longer, I shall certainly obtain, and which will guarantee me and mine an honorable subsistence. I have lately made two or three *popular* hits, as a kind of "*sop to Cerberus*," which will pave the way handsomely for my graver, more æsthetic work, which I have so long been engaged on, and it would be suicidal, wicked and impossible for me to leave. So I declined his offer, and beseech you to consider our separation destiny and not to be striven against. That I remember you and love you, you will see in my poetry, and when I have made my name and position, if life remains, dear Mother, I will come to you. *This I promise.* Wait and hope.

I enclose a piece of trash, thrown off in four hours (the day of the wedding) and published for fun. It is however, creating a great excitement all over the fashionable circles of the country, and my publishers are urging me to allow them to publish it with Hoppin's illustrations on tinted paper in the style of "Nothing to Wear." I hesitate, because I consider satire a poetic heresy, and don't wish any reputation as the author of stuff like this, of which either you or I could write a cart-load "*stans pede in uno*," but if I consent they will pay handsomely, and I am so poor this Fall I cannot buy Winter clothes for my Family. Money is money. Of course, if published in book-form, I shall revise it, and write as much again.

Stedman did not sanction this issue by Rudd & Carleton, of his satire. Of it, he wrote, in 1894, "I did not wish to sell my book on the strength of what I rightly considered a trivial and passing *jeu d'esprit.* In this respect I was too priggish. If I had been wise in my generation, and more a man of the world, I would have pushed my luck, as my friend Bret Harte did with his 'Chinese cheap labor' and would have accepted some of the offers for 'popular' work which 'The Diamond Wedding' brought me.

"As it was, I tried to live down my record as a satirist, and starved, and went to the war. And I still have notions of 'high art' and, after all, I am no longer starving."

On November 12, 1859, an anonymous ballad, "John Brown's Invasion," appeared in the *Tribune*. While utterly different from his earlier ballad, its authorship was credited to the writer of "The Diamond Wedding." Also, on that day, Stedman's poem "Heliotrope" was published in the *N. Y. Saturday Press*,—a literary paper which Henry Clapp, Jr., had started, Mr. Winter says, "in association with Edward Howland, October 29, 1858."

From her home in Florence, Italy, on December 22, 1859, Mrs. Kinney wrote:

Your "Diamond Wedding" has had a success in Florence very flattering to you and to me: all our friends, who do not take the N. Y. *Tribune*, or, who do not read it at the public reading-rooms, as the others do, have in turn sent to me for a copy of it—even Mrs. [E. B.] Browning, Mrs. [Harriet B.] Stowe, who is here, Mrs. [Anthony] Trollope, etc.,—and have all expressed the highest admiration of the poem. . . . That *I* am delighted with the very clever and very poetic satire, is not surprising: nor is the pride that I feel in my son on account of it more so; nor, that *his* success should be as near and dear to me—ay, even *dearer*—than my own; nor, that, should he continue to succeed in his literary efforts, I should feel repaid for lost hopes in any failures of my own. I am also quite as pleased, and so is Mr. Kinney, with your "Ballad of the Times" on poor staunch old Brown as with the satire which you call a poetic heresy, or, rather, a "heresy of poesy." It has but just reached me, yet I have read it to Mr. [Hiram] Powers, who seemed greatly to feel it—he is all alive for the hero-victim—and said the last verse was "glorious." Mrs. Stowe has spoken for it next, and I presume that it also will go the rounds, and return to me full of scars, and of honors. . . . Let success (and pray God you have many!) *elevate*, not *elate* you. I shall feel as much anxiety about your forthcoming volume as I did about my own. If it succeeds it will more than recompense me. What was the poem on old Brown originally published in? Satire may be heresy in poetry, but you have a special gift for it, and may do a great good by satirizing things open to ridicule. I understand that your "Diamond Wedding" prevented another ostentatious marriage display that was to have come off at Boston.

And again:

Mrs. Browning is in Rome and not in Paris. And this makes me think: Miss Blagden, an English authoress here, an intimate friend of the Brownings, liked your "Ballad of The Times" which I lent her, so well, that she sent it to Mrs. Browning, who writes from Rome that both she and her husband are so delighted with it, that they beg to keep it a little longer to show to some of their literary friends. I saw Mrs. Browning's letter in which she said that "there is an individuality of meaning and a rugged strength in it," which strikes her wonderfully, "while at the same time it is melodious and artistic." Mr. Browning bids Miss Blagden congratulate me and say that it is a long time since he has seen anything that pleased him so well. This is quite wonderful for them, who scarce ever find cause for praise in any modern poet, save Tennyson! In fact, the only other thing I have known Mrs. Browning to be pleased with, was the sonnet *Moonlight in Italy*, which I sent you recently, and of which Cleveland Coxe—himself no mean poet—said, it was worthy of the old Masters of the Sonnet. . . . I am afraid that you write too much for your health; and as for stump-speaking you have not the lungs for it, even if that were befitting the dignity of an earnest thinker. Pray do *nothing* to demean the talent—I may say the gift divine—which is in you.

It is said that Mr. Emerson used to read with pleasure "How Old Brown took Harper's Ferry" aloud to his family and friends. Later, it appeared in his "Parnassus." In March, 1906, Mr. Frederick Trevor Hill wrote Mr. Stedman asking his permission to include in an article on John Brown, which Mr. Hill was preparing for his "Decisive Battles of the Law," this stanza from that ballad:

But, Virginians, don't do it! for I tell you that the flagon,
Filled with blood of Old Brown's offspring, was first poured by
 Southern hands;

And each drop from Old Brown's life-veins, like the red gore of
the dragon,
May spring up a vengeful Fury, hissing through your slave-worn
lands!
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
May trouble you more than ever, when you've nailed his coffin
down!

"Of course," answered Mr. Stedman, "I shall feel honored by any reference you make to my now faraway poem. I thought it rough at the time—having not then 'learned to unlearn' the melodies of Keats and Shelley and Tennyson; but it was spontaneous, and it gained me the friendship of Emerson and the Brownings—and I can now see that it antedated, in a way, the ballad-swing of our oriole Kipling and his school.

"'To be young,' and poetic, in those ardent days just before the Civil War, was in truth 'very heaven.'

"I knew Dwight Stephens, Brown's lieutenant, as a pretty tough sort of schoolmate in Norwich, Connecticut, and little thought then that ten years later, I should aid in raising a fund to pay for his legal defence at Harper's Ferry. . . .

"Mr. Kipling wrote me that he and his friends got this ballad in India years ago, and used to *sing* the last line as follows: 'May make it a damned sight hotter when you've nailed his coffin down!'"

"'The Diamond Wedding' proved, says Richard Henry Stoddard, in his *Recollections*, "that a new poet had come, and one who could, if he chose, snatch the laurels from the brows of all the humorous poets of America."

"The other poem to which I have referred," Stoddard continues, "displayed a grim kind of humour which was new in American poetry. It was about a stern old man who made this year a memorable one in the history of the United States, by boldly marching with a few men into Virginia, and capturing Harper's Ferry. 'How Old Brown took Harper's Ferry' made a great sensation, and ought to have made it, for there was no American poet who might not have been proud to have written it."

The third of the *Tribune* Lyrics, published some months earlier, as individual as the later two, was "The Ballad of Lager Bier," reminiscent of the larks participated in at a "Free and Easy," conveniently near the Unitary Home, where,

On winter evenings, cold and blowing,
  'T is good to order "'alf-and-'alf";
To watch the fire-lit pewter glowing,
  And laugh a hearty English laugh;

. . . .

Here comes our drink, froth-crowned and sunlit,
  In goblets with high-curving arms,
Drawn from a newly opened runlet,
  As bier must be, to have its charms.
This primal portion each shall swallow
  At one draught, for a pioneer;
And thus a ritual usage follow
  Of all who honor Lager Bier.

. . . .

And is it Göttingen, or Gotha,
  Or Munich's ancient Wagner Bier,
Where each Bavarian drinks his quota,
  And swings a silver tankard high?
Or some ancestral Gast-Haus lofty
  In Nuremburg—of famous cheer
When Hans Sachs lived, and where, so oft, he
  Sang loud the praise of Lager Bier?

. . . .

For even now some curious glamour
  Has brought about a misty change!
Things look, as in a moonlight dream, or
Magician's mirror, quaint and strange.

. . . .

I see in yonder nook a trio:
  There's Doctor Faust, and, by his side,

Not half so love-distraught as Io,
  Is gentle Margaret, heaven-eyed;

Charles T. Congdon says that when Stedman offered this ballad to the *Tribune*, "Mr. Greeley was much pleased with it, which was the more remarkable because he probably did not know the taste, even if he knew the smell, of the mild tipple which Mr. Stedman celebrated so melodiously. He called out from his den that the poem reminded him of Thackeray's 'Ballad of Bouillabaise'—a remark worth repeating, not because Mr. Stedman's poem is particularly like Mr. Thackeray's, but because it shows that Mr. Greeley was familiar with the great novelist's best things."

When "The Ballad of Lager Bier" was reprinted the following spring of 1860, in a volume of poems by Stedman, Charles G. Leland wrote to a member of the Press: "A young friend of mine, *Stedman*, has just published a volume of poetry. God save me from ever trying to unduly influence the impartial judgment of anybody and least of all to attempt such a thing with the Press—but I may presume to call its attention to one song on *Lager Bier* which Stedman's volume contains, and which in these days of Temperance and of over-doing the walking-in-the-straight-paths principle, honestly deserves notice. In these hard times when it is as much as a man's character is worth to say a good word for Bacchus, Gambrinus or Venus, those who are really jolly in rhyme deserve encouragement."

In 1866, the Taylor Brewery Company issued a pamphlet, *Ale: in Prose and Verse by Barry Gray and John Savage.* Twenty years later, in a letter to Dwight King, Mr. Stedman explained:

> Your mention of the "Taylor's Ale" verses, brings the facts of the case back to my memory. Their poor little author, "Barry Gray," died within a year past. His name was Coffin—*lucus a non lucendo*—since he was in every respect, physically and in character, the very verse of Cooper's "Long Tom." As for the Lager Bier ballad, one of the songs of the days of my youth, I

never got a cent for it—though I was a starving Bohemian. Coffin *parodied* it, sold his doggerel to Taylor & Company for $500., and had the assurance to send me a copy of the book (an advertising pamphlet) with his compliments, etc. Really, he might have sent me a box of cigars with it, one would think!

However, I knew he needed the money and was glad anybody could profit by my verses—since I couldn't. And he really knew no better, and was a very harmless and pathetic hanger-on among our writers.

You are the only person that ever has spoken to me of the affair. The Taylor *brochure* must be "rare" by this time.

The *Tribune* was laughed at considerably because it did not pay Stedman for any of these ballads. On November 30, 1859, Charles A. Dana, then its managing editor, sent him to report the death and the funeral of Washington Irving. It was his first assignment, and the young man's blood was roused; but, as he had no acquaintance who could give him any intimate facts relating to the dead author, he had difficulty in obtaining the data necessary to fill the four columns which he had been ordered to write. During the services at the little church at Sleepy Hollow, he drew into conversation a tall man, who sat in the same pew, and from whom he gathered most of his information. This kind stranger was N. P. Willis, the poet and author. Once only did Stedman see Washington Irving. The evening before the funeral, he went to the old home, and at Sunnyside, the younger man gazed reverently at the stilled face of the older author, as he lay upon his bier.

For the report of Irving's funeral the *Tribune* paid Stedman ten dollars. He did not hesitate to express his opinion of the inadequacy of such a sum to Mr. Dana, who, whatever were his sentiments, repeated the frank words to Mr. Greeley. This report brought Stedman his connection with the paper, when Mr. Underhill resigned at the opening of 1860.

CHAPTER IX

EARLY FRIENDSHIPS

1860–1861

The publication of his three ballads in the *Tribune* gained Stedman something that was of the first importance. They gave him the friendship of two poets, whom he most desired to know—Bayard Taylor and Richard Henry Stoddard. These poets were then living together, during the winter, at 181 East Thirteenth Street. Taylor chancing, one afternoon, to meet the young balladist in the editorial rooms of the *Tribune*, talked with him. On going home, Taylor told Stoddard of "the new poet," whose poems they both had read, concluding, "I have invited him to visit us, for I know you will like him." Stoddard seconded this invitation by a letter to Stedman, which, on January 13, brought him to dinner at the home of the older men. There he met also their wives and Charles G. Leland and George H. Boker. Of this meeting Mr. Stoddard says:

> This likable young poet came to see me, and I was charmed with him. He had read much, I discovered; he talked well; and he was what most poets are not—modest. . . . I asked him to show me his poems, printed and unprinted, for he told me that he had enough to make a small volume; and he did so. I read them with great care; I corrected them where I thought they needed it, and I tried to get a publisher for him. I think that my opinion was not without weight with the gentleman who became his publisher,—the elder Mr. Charles Scribner. "Poems, Lyrical and Idyllic," which was issued in the Spring of 1860 was and is the best first book that I ever read.
>
> The two poems that opened it showed that the writer had read the greatest poet of our time—Alfred Tennyson; but they also

showed that his own originality had not been overpowered by his admiration for this master. "Penelope," the second poem, was and is worthy to be read with Tennyson's noble poem of "Ulysses." The hand of a fine Greek scholar is visible in every line. That he was familiar with the scenery of New England, and the early life of its people, was evident in "The Freshet," which is still the best example of American idyllic poetry. One feels in reading it that Stedman knew what he was writing about.

Of this first welding of a friendship, which was to endure so long as life itself endured, Mr. Stedman wrote on the occasion of Mr. Stoddard's seventieth birthday, July 2, 1895:

> It is harder for me than for others to think of Mr. Stoddard as a septuagenarian—so vividly my earliest remembrance of him comes up when we have been for some time without a meeting. Certainly I cannot look up to him with any more reverence now than I felt when we first met, and that, it chances, was about thirty-five years ago—so that I have known the charm and vantage of his friendship throughout half his own lifetime. In truth, so far up Pisgah's Mount he then seemed to me, though my senior by less than the decade of years which sets off each literary generation, that I wondered whether a lifetime of toiling below would ever make me reach the point at which he stood.
>
> In years, yes, and how far beyond it! In vision, no,—for each climber and dreamer has his own magic glass, and through the lenses of Mr. Stoddard there always have come to him glimpses of "some far-off enchanted land" of which he could sing to us, but might not impart to others his heavenly gift to see it.
>
> Can I ever forget him at thirty-five, with his strong, slight frame, his dark hair, his smile both sweet and humorous, his distinctively poetic eye,—even then the fine pallor of the student upon him, as he sat among his books and pictures, just as he sits now every Winter evening, within a stone's throw of the home where I then found him. Chance and change have come upon everybody else whom we both knew. Assuredly I still remember, and ever will, that he and Bayard Taylor were the poets I first wished to know, and who first permitted me to know them; and that it was Mr. Stoddard who patiently looked over the manuscript of "the songs of the days" of my own youth, and thought—or, at all events,

made his friend Mr. Scribner think—that, if only for their spirit of youth, "something sweet, with flying feet," possibly might follow after them.

Mr. and Mrs. Stedman became frequent visitors at the house on Thirteenth Street; and a friendship no less admiring sprang up between them and the wives of these new friends. In a small pocket diary, chronicling daily occurrences, which Mr. Stedman began to keep in 1860, there is this early entry: "Read Mrs. Stoddard's poems. Have seen nothing so good from an American woman." Almost invariably the Stedmans attended the weekly receptions of the Taylors and Stoddards held on Saturday evenings. There, in their hospitable rooms, gathered poets, authors, painters, and musicians. Beside such habitués as Boker and Leland, were Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hicks, Mr. and Mrs. Fitz-Hugh Ludlow, James Lorimer Graham, Jr., and Wilson Barstow, brother of Mrs. Stoddard. Other guests, then more eminent, if less intimate, were Dr. Griswold, George P. Morris, N. P. Willis, and his musician brother Richard Storrs Willis. Of the man who was to become so great a friend, Mr. Stedman wrote after one of these evenings, "It is Taylor's *personnel*, more than anything else, that has gained him such hosts of friends. He is a genial, handsome, good-hearted man, and carries sunshine with him wherever he goes."

Young Aldrich was soon an informal visitor at the Unitary Home, spending many an evening in chat with Stedman and his wife. "She and I," wrote Stedman to him, in 1905, "were babes in the Manhattan wood, and you were the first young poet who strolled again and again into our thicket." And Stedman in turn used to visit Aldrich at his editorial office at the *Home Journal*, where Aldrich was much in favor with its editor, N. P. Willis.

Another friend whom Stedman met at this period, if not somewhat earlier, since Stedman always cherished him as his oldest New York friend, was William Conant Church, then publisher of the *Sun*. One of the early meetings between these young men was when Stedman sought Church with a request that he would give a position on the *Sun* to his friend Thomas Harland, which favor Mr. Church was able to grant. The attachment between these two friends strengthened with each year.

Still another friend whom Stedman first saw in 1860, was William Winter, then the sub-editor and writer of leading articles on the *Saturday Press*. This friend was deeply beloved by Stedman for "nearly fifty years."

Fitz-James O'Brien and Edward H. House were also numbered among those who sought out young Stedman, who while *among* these "Bohemians," was, as he used to say in after years, with a something that conveyed a tinge of poetic regret—not exactly *of* them. At a service held in 1909, in commemoration of Mr. Stedman, Colonel William C. Church said, in referring to the Bohemian cult: "It had more or less interest for us all and in spite of its cynicism there was something stimulating in the freedom of thought it encouraged, but it never really touched the heart of Stedman; it was something he turned aside by the way to enjoy for the moment, but he took no further part in it. His sturdy New England character, his strong sense of duty, his faithfulness to every obligation kept him free from any possibility of sympathetic association with that side of life."

What William Winter has to say of the matter is this: "Neither Taylor, Stoddard, Stedman, nor Boker was associated with the Bohemian group that gathered round the satiric Henry Clapp, in the days of the *Saturday Press* and Pfaff's Cave. None of these poets led a Bohemian life or evinced practical sympathy with what is called Bohemianism."

Among Mr. Stedman's memorabilia, there is a note, which for its conspicuous chronicling seems to argue against the frequency of such an occurrence: "Supper at Pfaff's cellar, Broadway, 1860; Present: Clapp, Jr., Arnold, O'Brien, Wood, Wilkins, Neil, Ada Clare, Jenny Danforth, House, Winter, Whitman, Artemus Ward, (Browne), Aldrich, Stedman—(Mem. *Nine* of them now dead, July, 1877). 11 dead, Feb. 22, 1907."

In 1890, at the death of Charles Pfaff, Mr. Stedman said to an interviewer from the *Herald:*

> Clapp, Wilkins, O'Brien and the rest have a lot of beer and pipes ready to welcome Pfaff over there, I suppose, for he was a generous host to them all and some of them he supported in their latter days.
>
> They were all my friends. They were clever, hard working set—some of them brilliant fellows. Mr. Clapp was editor of the *Saturday Press*. Many of its writers were in the habit of meeting at Pfaff's. They also wrote for *Vanity Fair*, which was the first measurably successful illustrated comic and literary weekly. I was a contributor to *Vanity Fair*, which expired some time after the war began. The *Saturday Press* was irregularly clever. Mr. Winter was the leading critic and wrote admirable reviews. He made his journalistic reputation on that paper. The paper was usually hard up, and Mr. Clapp took in several business partners, one after the other. When he got what he called "fresh blood" he used to divide it up among the boys.
>
> Clapp's strong point was in his epigrams and *mots*, which he sprinkled through his paper. Among the writers who used to gather at Pfaff's were Frank Wood, Charles Dawson Shanley, Wilkins, Fitz-James O'Brien, T. B. Aldrich (occasionally), Walt Whitman, Ada Clare, and George Arnold, a lovable man and a brilliant poet, who died just as he was settling down to earnest work.
>
> Charles F. Browne (Artemus Ward) was summoned from an Ohio newspaper to the staff of *Vanity Fair*, where he wrote some of his most brilliant fantastic sketches. Some time after, when beginning to be known as a lecturer, he was in at Pfaff's and received a telegram or letter from California, "What will you take for forty nights?"
>
> "Brandy and soda, answer them," sang out Clapp. Browne did, and established a reputation on the Pacific coast.
>
> Pfaff was good natured to the literary people who used to dine before their evening's work in the Bohemian quarter of his Broadway restaurant under the sidewalk. He gave them plenty of credit and they paid their scores when they could.
>
> There was a pathetic side to those days. If many of these men

were living now, as some of them are, with equal wit and romance and ambition in their way, they would be in society, have cheerful homes, belong to clubs, have stable if not handsome incomes—in short, lead the lives of other successful professional men. As it was, the pace, the hard work, the irregular income together killed off many of them. No other such list of names that I remember could show such a death roll within fifteen years from that period—from '59 to '63. That was New York's Bohemian Olympiad.

There was not much of a literary market at that time. Newspaper salaries were very low. There were few magazines, and scarcely any but *Harper's* and the *Atlantic* paid much of anything. New York itself was not literary and looked with distrust, if not contempt, upon working writers. These people were mostly from the country. They had scarcely any acquaintances in the city outside of their profession. You can easily see that they were thrown back upon themselves and made the most of that artistic, happy-go-lucky *bonhomie* and comradeship.

> For, loving Beauty, and, by chance,
> Too poor to make her all in all,
> They spurn her half-way maintenance
> And let things mingle as they fall.

Once in recalling these days with a friend, Stedman remarked, "If there had been a *Century*, a *Cosmopolitan*, and a score of other *paying* magazines, I suppose that Clapp, Arnold, O'Brien, and the rest, would have been as 'conservative' as our modern authors, and would have dined above stairs, and not under the pavement."

On March 5, 1860, Scribner accepted Mr. Stedman's first book. "He is a slow publisher," says the poet, "and won't advertise, but I am grateful." The author is at once found making out "book-circulars," and planning the style, make-up, and circulation of the volume. "Poems, Lyrical and Idyllic" was published on April 10th. It was a slender collection that Stedman modestly offered with an earnest little Preface:

> This volume is mostly composed of such productions, as have somewhat borne the tests of time and review—to which they have

been subjected by the author, in the earnest desire to prefer his art before himself. If they exhibit too great variety of purpose, it is because he has not been able, at any one period during the last few years, to prepare enough matter to offer in the present form. What has been done is the result of unequal moments, saved from that daily task-work, which must first be met by every true man on whom it is imposed. . . .

Stedman had written these "Lyrics and Idyls" spontaneously from time to time; some had been finished in his youth, and all before he had made any literary acquaintance. "There were no circumstances," he wrote long afterwards to an inquirer, "which encouraged me to write my first book, in the year just preceding our Civil War. If you were to ask me what there was to *dis*courage me I could tire you with replies. There was scarcely any 'literary market' for an American author; publishers were few, and more afraid of poetry than they now are of verse." The book was on the whole well received. The press seemed glad to welcome him who had lately figured in their columns. If their critics found a resemblance to the forms used by Tennyson, Hood, or Praed; and if they could trace the sources of his wide poetic sympathy and inspiration, they nevertheless granted that his song was melodious, and his own.

Mr. Stedman was gratified by receiving the following letter, whose gentle admonition sank into his soul. He never forgot it—nor did he ever forget any words of similar wisdom. Mr. Willis's criticism helped to make him the slow and fastidiously careful reviser of his rapid and impulsive first drafts. He also grew more conscious of his technique, and, in later years, sometimes selected, and laid out, a foundation, and then built his structure word by word.

IDLEWILD, April 18, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR,

After a week's absence from home, I find your volume and note on my table—the book a doublet, as, (remembering my exchange of magnetism with you at Sunnyside) I had already requested Scribner's clerk to send me one, and was reading it. Several of the poems had pleased me exceedingly—others less—but they all show the *capability*. You are likely, I think, to dismiss work from your hand a little too soon. Young poets, of course, think much less of the *labor limæ* than we old fellows have learned to do.

We have given up *reviewing* in the *Home Journal*, but I shall find a way to speak of your pleasant volume before long.

With many thanks,

Yours very truly,
N. P. Willis.

Many years later, Stedman said: "I was very anxious to bring out my first book in New York in Boston style, having a reverence for Boston, which I continue to have. I wished to have a 16mo, which I thought was the proper shape for books. There was not a printer who could set up a 16mo, and I went to Mr. Scribner's premises, that son of a publisher of blessed memory, who put himself to some expense to indulge me in the whim, and we went to Mr. Craighead's, in Centre Street, and I stood over his forms, and there was trouble in locking up, cutting rules and leads. But I brought out the first 16mo ever produced in New York, and I have a copy of it now. Since that time I have printed books at the Riverside Press, University Press, and I have had Mr. De Vinne's edition of a book on Japanese paper, and no more beautiful work, so far as beautiful typography is concerned, ever came from the American press."

To judge from an extract in a letter, in 1860, from his mother, Stedman may not have been satisfied with the reception of his book. Her letter speaks also of Walter Savage Landor, and again of the Brownings, and as Mr. Stedman was himself to write upon these poets, it seems appropriate to include a narrative, which may have stimulated an early interest in them:

From his Mother.

Florence, May 19, 1860.

As yet I have seen but two notices of your poems, (which should have been entitled Lyric and Idyllic instead of lyrical to my taste), the one in the *New York Observer*, and another in a

Boston paper, both short, but complimentary. Send me all you can—*bad* and *good;* though I hardly know how the *Press* or any other paper can speak "savagely" of such poems. However, you must not be disappointed if they make little noise. Poetry now-a-days, unless it comes from some established name, scarce passes for a nine days' wonder, however good. I am very impatient to see the volume.

One of our near neighbors here is old Walter Savage Landor. He comes in often to see us: the other day sat two hours with me, talking of all the distinguished literary men of the past century. Though eighty-five years old, his wit is as ready, and his sarcasm as keen as in his freshest days. His is in sooth a green old age, all his faculties being in full preservation. He is in short eminently amusing: tells anecdotes of Byron, Hunt, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, Wordsworth, etc., all of whom were his personal friends. Such old men as he, are intelligent links between the past and the present. His only intimate companion now is a yellow Spitz dog, who accompanies him where he goes, and stays with him where he stays. Indeed one never sees old Savage without his dog: and a touching sight is it, that gray-haired poet trudging on over these hills, followed by his faithful Spitz, . . . Poor old Savage! Strangers minister to his wants; a hired lodging gives him shelter, and his *dog* all the affection of a canine friend.

I enclose you a note just received from Mr. J. J. Jarves, the author, to put among your autographs. He is a particular friend of mine; spent last evening with us, and said he should soon sail for America to carry his famous gallery, and bring out his new work on Ancient Art which will be illustrated with engravings of some of the finest pictures in his collection. This comprises many of the choicest paintings of the best old schools. He has been years at work to find these pictures for the noble purpose of establishing a gallery in one of the chief cities of the U. S. The works he has collected are *genuine:* not only is he himself a connoisseur of true Art, but he has the testimony of the first judges as to the genuineness of his gallery. When he goes I will give him a letter to you, and you will see that his new work, which is to be a magnificant one, is handsomely reviewed in the *Tribune.*

The Brownings are still in Rome, but expected here before the month ends. The *Independent* has offered Mrs. Browning a hundred dollars for any original scrap of her poetry, and she has sent already one new piece for them. This is writing poetry to the present purpose! I suppose her "Curse"[1] to America, called forth the generous offer. It would take with H. W. Beecher, of course, and aside from the slavery question is about the best of the "Poems Before Congress." Your *Penelope* is classically beautiful: all you write—as Mr. Kinney says—shows fine culture. I have greatly enjoyed Tennyson's "Idylls of the King"; how refreshing they are in their chaste purity! However, let your poems be not *Tennysonish*, but *Stedmanish*. He is a great poet as the *creator* of a school: Go thou and do *likewise*, thus proving *your* greatness.

Beside his regular *Tribune* work, and an occasional special article for the *Herald*, and *Momus*, commencing February 4, 1860, Mr. Stedman eked out his "scanty wage" by becoming the alert New York correspondent for the *Chicago Press* and *Tribune*, contributing, as his chief requested, and to the latter's satisfaction, such letters as might be expected from the author of "The Diamond Wedding." These weekly letters were signed "Launcelot."

Writing, in 1901, to a dissatisfied aspirant, Mr. Stedman says: "Look here! You are a well equipped writer. Put your natural gifts to their proper use. *I* detest journalism as much as you must (both of us have the poetic taint), but I was starved into it, and ate my 'peck of dirt' as cheerily as possible, having a wife and babes."

It is pleasant to find Stedman on February 29, 1860, rallying to the aid of an old school-mate, who was under sentence of death in the Charlestown, Virginia, jail:

Editor Norwich Bulletin:—Sir:—Your readers have observed in yesterday's papers that Mr. George Sennott, the Boston lawyer who so ably defended Aaron Dwight Stephens at Charlestown, Virginia, is now *en route* for that State, in the hope of obtaining a pardon for our brave and unfortunate Norwich boy. To this end he proposes to spend some time in Richmond—in fact, not to leave or cease his exertions until the pardon is granted, or the last hope blotted out. Mr. Sennott's expenses have been great, and not half re-imbursed by those who sympathize with the captives of Harper's Ferry. Now, of course, he will have to incur a large additional expense, which should properly be divided among the many who feel interested for his success.

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[1] "A Curse for a Nation: Prologue, The Curse."

The Boston Committee have done what they could—have paid largely for the expenses of the John Brown trial, and the present burden should be shared, it seems to me, by the people of the State and town where Stephens had his birth. Why cannot citizens of Norwich at once step forward and make up a purse of $200 toward this end. Will not you, Mr. Editor, volunteer to receive subscriptions, which can be forwarded when a sufficient amount has been obtained, to the *Tribune* Office, New York, under whose care any package directed to Mr. Sennott, will reach him safely? For the honor of old Norwich, this matter should be attended to at once.

The artists' receptions at the Studio Building in Tenth Street, where Stedman first saw, and probably met, Edwin Booth, Sanford R. Gifford, Jervis McEntee, Launt Thompson, and Albert Bierstadt, were pleasant oases in the routine of his reportorial work. It was encouraging to have his song, "Voice of the Western Wind," sung at Thomas's Concert, and the music and words published the next day. At the theater he saw Mrs. John Wood, the burlesque actress; and he was happy to hear again and again Adelina Patti in all her first triumphal glory. A speech which impressed him was the one delivered by the Honorable Abraham Lincoln, at Cooper Institute, of which he said, "probably no public man has so ably commended himself to the respect of his hearers in a first appearance." When Mr. Lincoln was nominated in the following summer of 1860, the *Chicago Tribune* wired Stedman for a campaign song, requesting that he should write and forward it immediately. "I took," says Mr. Stedman, "'Honest Old Abe' for a refrain, and wrote those off-hand verses that same evening. The campaign song, 'Honest Abe of the West'[1] was I believe, the first

[1] "It was one of the most popular songs of the campaign, and I gave it first place in my book," said O. H. Oldroyd, when he included in 1896, a correct text of the song in his collection entitled, "Lincoln's Campaign." The first booklet in which the song appeared was a New York collection of the campaign songs, gathered into a little twenty-five cent pamphlet by Mr. Bungay, and called "Bobolink Minstrel."

Lincoln song. If I remember rightly, it was telegraphed down (by the *Chicago Tribune* people) to a big ratification meeting at Springfield, Illinois, and 'deaconed out,' line by line, to the audience, and then sung for the first time."

But reporting wore on Mr. Stedman—"Attended execution of Maude at Newark, and wrote long report. Shameful to earn a living in this way." Also many extra duties were assigned to him which were beyond his strength. Such entries as these are found in his diary: "Have taken Mr. Wilkinson's place as editor in charge of personal column and mail reader." "City editor gone. I take his place and stay till Six."

In the spring of 1860, while Mr. Stedman was detained in town, he rented one of the cottages at The Phalanx at Strawberry Farms for his family, and he took a bachelor room with his friends, Taylor and Stoddard. A pleasant greeting which he found there one day, during the temporary absence of his friend, brought forth this response:

DEAR TAYLOR:

Coming back from a Sunday at Strawberry Farms, where I've been to secure a nest for my chickens, I find your wine and a note—as genial as the grape juice—awaiting my return. After one has achieved his first Spring escape from brick fastnesses, and is recaptured by the thought of labor to perform, he enters the City again with strange dread of its stifling power. You know he longs to leave, forever, its struggle, hurry and fret, and hide away in the meadows of which he has seen just enough to make him, like Oliver Twist, ask for more. So it needed just such a token as yours to remind me for how much friendship, for how many pleasant moments, I am of late indebted to the City, and to content me more with a pilgrimage therein.

I'll keep this wine to conjure with for, surely, if any "golden water" has power to summon spirits—to make

"New life-blood warm the bosom,
And barren common-places break,
To full and kindly blossom—"

'tis that bought of Cozzens and sent with the love of Bayard Taylor. But here Laura says that she shall use the Sherry in her own way: a glass-full every morning, until she assimilates from it, not only the health, but the sunny spirits of your wife. And so with the real *thank you* of both to both.

Mrs. Stoddard visiting at the country home of the Taylors at Kennett Square, writes:

How do you get on—how is Laura—are the children well—have you plenty of money, how is your health? I want to get back to the barracks in 13th Street—and shall be there before many days I hope. I am to rebegin housekeeping in my usual style of splendor and munificence. I shall buy six new glasses, one new table cloth, and be happy. I pore over my Ms. every day, struggle, fight, despair and hope over it. I have a hundred and twenty-five pages done—not yet half completed. If it proves a failure I shall have a fit of sickness. I cannot work as fast as I am prepared in mind, on account of my not being well, and the care of Willy. I have to do everything for him, wash, dress, feed, and watch him. I hope we are to have some good times together in the coming months. *Our* atmosphere is electrical, don't you think so?

Stoddy and Steddyfied? with an Elizabethan spirit permeating—or rather percolating it! To say nothing of Tom. Aldrich, Leland, Bayard and others. If you come across any choice spirits save them up for my prey at our den. I expect the condition of the rooms, beds, clothes, etc. is awful. I am going to have a dreadful clean as soon as I come, and shall come down like the day of judgment on the debris. You of course have no spare time for writing verse—what a pity. I fear my poetical days are over—I am growing gray every minute—my soul is getting ashen.

The ensuing Spring days gave no impression for Stedman's diary. He had, however, become staunch friends with Manton Marble the practical editor of the *World*, a paper, with religious antecedents, which had started on May 1, 1860, and in whose career Stedman was thoroughly interested. On June 29, 1860, the diary continues:

Ever since my last entry, I've been working very hard on the *Tribune* at inadequate pay, and doing the hack-work which is so pressing on those able and obliged to do it, when parsimony keeps the "force" of an office too much reduced. Have roomed with the Stoddards and in sickness and weariness have been greatly cheered by their kind love. Have had no time to do any writing for myself, no strength, and am forced to be very, very economical in all directions.

July 2. Aldrich spent Sunday with us at Strawberry Farms, and came up with me this A. M. The country looks charming.

5. Letter from Marble about *World* editorship.

6. Received letter from Mother astonishing me with hopes of her arrival.

9. Mother comes to visit us after ten years—long years of absence! Arrived this A. M. at four o'clock. What a meeting we had!

10. Sold 5 Brunswick at 6.

16. Made editor of *Weekly Tribune.*

17. Talked with *The World* people.

18. *Vanity Fair* gone into Leland's hands.

22. At Phalanx with Mother and Charley—Happy day.

August 4. Left *Tribune* to take editorship of *Evening World.*

8. Commenced on *World* at $25. per week.

September 10. Moved from Stoddards' to room with A. C. Hills, 371—Fourth Street.

Stedman's associates on the *World*, says Mr. Stoddard, "included the well-known musical critic, Richard Grant White, and Thomas Evans, who, on going to England to engage Dickens, with no guarantee of his ability to pay him for his projected journey to the United States, was believed to have appeared under the name of Eugene Raymond." Others were Stoddard himself who contributed the *Literary News*, James R. Spaulding, the editor-in-chief, David Goodman Croly, the city editor, Claudius B. Conant, who wrote leading articles, as did Stedman, who, moreover, held the position of day editor.

The visit to America in the autumn of 1860 of the Prince of Wales, gave Stedman an opportunity for a new satire. "The Prince's Ball," for which Stedman received fifty dollars, and the plates, was published first in *Vanity Fair.*

It was then taken by Carleton, and printed on tinted paper, with illustrations by Stephens, "to catch the 'groundlings,'" says its author, "and of this wretched trash thousands were sold—enough to pay for my other books."

Then, through Rudd & Carleton, for one hundred and fifty dollars, Stedman purchased his copyright and the plates of his "Poems, Lyrical and Idyllic." Four days later, he wrote this letter to his mother:

New York, October 19, 1860.

Let me tell you about "The Prince's Ball." The stupid, know-nothing, good-natured people! How they buy my trash, and anybody's trash, and let the good things go to seed. The first part of the Poem was surely a "great success." It trebled the usual edition of *Vanity Fair*, is quoted from everywhere; everybody reads it, and the *Vanity Fair* people are still printing the back numbers from stereotype plates. Bah! without any affectation, it is enough to make me disgusted. The urgent need of money and, *ergo*, of popular American reputation—or notoriety, makes us prostitute our Art. Well, Rudd & Carleton rushed up at once to ask leave to take all the illustrations and get it in book-form—ten per cent copyright. I said *No*. Thought of Laura's dresses and said *Yes*. Went at the last part. Could not get an idea. All written out and exhausted. Brain consumptive; body sleepy and worn out. So it went till the last two days, when the necessity of the case and the expectation of the public grew so strong that I locked myself up, and in little more than a day wrote "The Crowning Night"[1]—350 lines. As I knew it must come out in book-shape, I tried to put some poetry in it—you must judge whether I succeeded. I had an amanuensis to sit up with me and write duplicates for Rudd & Carleton and *Vanity Fair*, as fast as I finished it, and by Monday, at sunrise, it was in the hands of both. Wednesday it appeared in *Vanity Fair* and was even more successful than the first half. They are making great sales and say I have saved the paper. Lowell has written on and offered to contribute, and a brilliant staff will be at once announced. To-morrow Rudd & Carleton announced to publish the book, on tinted paper, elegantly bound, etc., but they have so many advance orders (for 1600 copies) that they postpone it till Tuesday. It will have a quick sale, and then never be heard of again—a mere ephemera. I hope to make a couple of hundred dollars, besides what I have been paid by *Vanity Fair.*

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[1] In book-form entitled, "The Academy Ball."

Have sent you both copies of *Vanity Fair*, one to Paris—one to the Baths of Lucca, but, lest you may not receive the last part, I enclose it, *minus* the cuts, from the *Saturday Press*, which copied it by special permission. All the old Bohemian crowd, my assailants, are making friends again.

Will send you the book, when I have a chance. Have been thus particular in stating these facts, as you requested careful details.

Am getting lecture invitations—but have no strength or courage to write any more at present. Shall review Stoddard's book next week, at some length, and then *rest*, I hope. Have ordered my nice Winter suit early, to go to Mrs. Davidson's party next Wednesday. This, in remembrance of my Mother. Please write me if you give the Brownings my book. Yesterday, I wrote *just as nice a column* as I could concoct, and placed it on the editorial columns of the *World* for Jarves' benefit. It has attracted attention of all our *litterateurs* to him, and he is feeling very happy. I have also introduced him to Dana, and other magnates.

And now give my love to my precious sisters—dear Mary and Clem—if I could only fold them in my arms! . . . Remember me with affection and respect to Mr. Kinney.

From his Mother.

FLORENCE, December 8, 1860.

I am more than ever convinced by your "Prince's Ball," that poetry "to order" is an impossibility. You wrote the "Diamond Wedding" from the true impulse, and it is a *true* "humorous Poem"; this other was "gotten up" for *money*, and (*I* will be plain with you, because your reputation is as dear to me as my own) has more of *base* than of true metal in it. *You* know this, as well as *I* do, and have therefore called it wisely a *brochure;* but, knowing it, why my son, risk your reputation for *money* (*however needy*) and consent to let the thing take a permanent form? In the Weekly it would have soon perished. The good "hits" you made before were intrinsically worth preservation, though they did not so firmly establish your name, as, that you could afford to put a mere *sand-stone* in the foundation of your structure, alongside, though it be, of the granite there. It is a pity (as I exclaimed to myself on reading those puffy-puffs) that you should be made the hero of an inferior class of scribblers. Pray shake off these *toadies!* Better bear the criticisms of superiors, than the baseless praise of *second-raters*. I want to see you rise on your own solid worth; for I believe there is that in you which can achieve *fame*. Why be tickled then with *notoriety* alone? Fallacious laudation should be scorned by one whom both Nature and Art have made a poet. Now I am so careful of your reputation, that while I lend your volume to all who can appreciate it, I will not let one of them see the "Prince's Ball." And you think just as I do about it, or *profess* to, why then let those penny-a-liners puff it up as poetry, or *humor* even, till your good reputation bursts with it? Pray Heaven you be *inspired* to give something truly great—about the *Union*, or some other exciting interest of the day, which shall obliterate from memory this falsely called "Humorous Poem"! I speak forcibly because sensitive more than yourself in touching your good name. It is a misfortune to have the temptation of poverty joined with a facile pen; but I pray you, my darling son, to face starvation sooner than a fallacious reputation.

It may well be that Stedman winced under his mother's words, which touched a spot acutely sensitive. Tempted as he might have been, in his impulsive youth, with the need of money, and with the world before him, he held his Muse so sacred that to her he would bring only of his best. To burst forth into buoyant stanzas, throbbing with life and verve was the sincere expression of a nature ceaselessly animated. But, shutting his ears to every call to write another "Prince's Ball," Stedman, with a high determination, drew in his "Peter Stuyvesant's New Year's Call,"[1] published also in *Vanity Fair*, such a brilliant picture as this:

That ancient room! I see it now:
  The carven nutwood dresser;
The drawers, that many a burgher's vrouw
  Begrudged their rich possessor;

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[1] "I made a long and conscientious study for this ballad, trying, as in the 'Ballad of Lager Bier' to ape the Flemish in their sense of the halo gilding real and common things." E. C. S.

The brace of high-backed leathern chairs,
  Brass-nailed at every seam;
Six others, ranged in equal pairs;
  The bacon hung abeam;
The chimney-front, with porcelain shelft;
  The hearty wooden fire;
The picture, on the steaming delft
  Of David and Goliah.

I see the two old Dutchmen sit
  Like Magog and his mate,
And hear them, when their pipes are lit,
  Discuss affairs of state:
The clique that would their sway demean;
  The pestilent importation
Of wooden nutmegs, from the lean
  And losel Yankee nation.

Again, in a different mood, he wrote:

For here, on the dear old hillside, I lie at rest again,
And think with a quiet self-content of all the passion and pain,
Of the strong resolve and the after-strife; but the vistas round me
    seem
So little changed that I hardly know if the past is not a dream.

Can I have sailed, for seven years, far out in the open world;
Have tacked and drifted here and there, by eddying currents
    whirled;
Have gained and lost, and found again; and now, for a respite,
    come
Once more to the happy scenes of old, and the haven I voyaged
    from?

Blended, infinite murmurs of True Love's earliest song,
Where are you slumbering out of the heart that gave you echoes
    so long?
But chords that have ceased to vibrate the swell of an ancient
    strain
May thrill with a soulful music when rightly touched again.

So, the first months of 1861 passed,—in writing some poetry, in editorial work, and in convivial hours with friends. The impending crisis of war, which loomed over the country on that New Year had made him long and decide to go to Washington for his paper, the *World*. Foiled at first in his intent, when the news of the Bombardment of Fort Sumter shook New York with its terrific significance, Stedman instantly "claimed the right to go South."

CHAPTER X

WAR CORRESPONDENT

1861

It is difficult for those of this generation to realize the conditions following the firing on Fort Sumter in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, April 12 and 13, 1861, when the spirit and the purposes of war succeeded the dull routine of peace; every city, town, and hamlet in the land was converted into a recruiting station, and the churches were transformed into soldiers' aid associations. The tidal wave of feeling that swept over the country carried all before it, and it was not strange that Stedman, with his patriotic New England inheritance, his ardent temperament, and his youthful love of adventure, should have been among the very first to hasten "to the front," as the center of disturbance, Washington and its vicinity, was designated.

From the hour which inspired his John Brown ballad, Stedman had been deeply interested on the Northern side. "How few," he would later say, "of the new men understand all that was in our hearts in those historic days." His poem "The Twelfth of April," afterward entitled "Sumter," written on the morning of Saturday, the 13th of April, 1861, was published that same day in the evening *World*, and, on the Wednesday following, in its morning edition. It was the first poem printed after the outbreak of hostilities, for—

O, the fury of the fight
Even then was at its height!
Yet no breath, from noon till night,
        Reached us here;
We had almost ceased to wonder,
And the day had faded under,
When the echo of the thunder
        Filled each ear!

Then our hearts more fiercely beat,
As we crowded on the street,
Hot to gather and repeat
    All the tale;
All the doubtful chances turning,
Till our souls with shame were burning,
As if twice our bitter yearning
    Could avail!

April 14, 1861, Stedman travelled all night to reach Washington, where his paper had stationed a telegraph reporter: Stedman "claimed the right" to become its letter correspondent. He was the first man occupying such an office to reach the capital, and was there through "the dark days" after the Baltimore riot while all communication was severed between Washington and the North. This change to active scenes and duties was welcomed also in the hope that his health, breaking down from confinement and work, would now mend. At once his letters are filled with a throbbing interest, reflecting the vital conditions at Washington, expressing his own frank opinions and predictions, relating whatever his alert, discerning mind felt would be of importance to the expectant readers at the North.

Turning to his diary is found:

April 15, 1861. In Washington at Willard's Hotel. Saw Cobb. Am to try for staff commission in event of active war. Wrote *World*.

16. Wrote *World* letter on Virginia. Made acquaintance of Myers, Hon. McPherson, Dr. Taylor, Plumley—Philadelphia. Got letter to Cameron, [Secretary of War], from Cummings, [Publisher of the *World*.]

17. Wrote *World:* "Defence of Washington."

18. Wrote *World:* "A day of excitement." Undertook to leave my hotel, lost baggage, and returned.

19. Came to Mr. Joy's after breakfast to board at $8. per week. Rode in A. M. to see troops and Navy Yard with Major Perley Poore, O. H. Dutton, Adams, Hill, W. A. Bartlett. [George] Adams gone to Harper's Ferry. Introduced to General Cameron.

20. Wrote letter in A. M. from Washington, and one in evening from Baltimore.

21. Had to pay half of $20. to return to Washington in livery carriage, accompanied by Mr. Rosencrantz of Alexandria. Trains stopped by rebels. Pistol fight at the Laurel.

Thirty-two years later, in a letter to Augustus White Long, Mr. Stedman recalls this period:

> I am very glad to receive [your letter], and thus to be reminded of the joyous days of my youth—for youth *is* joyous whether there is war or peace, and whether the sky is dark or sunny. . . .
>
> My dinner with Dr. Rosencrantz, Colonel Stone, etc., is as fresh in my mind as if it had occurred last year. I had journeyed from Baltimore to Washington with Dr. Rosencrantz, after the riots there, in a very expensively hired carriage. We struck up a friendship, and I was indebted to the Doctor for courtesies in Alexandria. I remember perfectly well that Mr. Jamieson had been the first to hang out the Union flag in that strongly disloyal town, and that his action was discussed at the dinner and warmly praised by all present.
>
> You surprise me, however, by saying that his was the first flag hung out "in a seceded state." Had Virginia actually seceded at the date of the Ellsworth expedition to Alexandria? I am writing at my office, and therefore cannot refer to the War histories at this moment.
>
> Speaking of Colonel [Charles P.] Stone, then commandant at Alexandria, I will say that I was impressed by his *soldierly* bearing, but found him so thoroughly a "martinet" and so loud in praise of Lee and other West Point (Southern) officers, that I was not surprised when he fell under suspicion after the Ball's Bluff disaster. Very likely he was treated unjustly, but his injudicious speech and manner certainly "provoked injustice."
>
> I often have wondered whether Dr. Rosencrantz were still in this world. Perhaps you can inform me. Pray extend my congratulations to Mr. Jamieson on his continuance. I am glad to renew my testimony with respect to his friendly attitude in '61—which history so gloriously vindicated—and you are quite at liberty to cite me in evidence.

In 1886, Stedman wrote to Major Benjamin Perley Poore, Washington correspondent of the *Boston Journal:* "It is hearty and pleasant to see your signature again, and to find that you remember the (now gray-haired) Yankee, who looked up to you with such awe, and to whom you extended all the courtesies of the guild, when the *World* first sent him to Washington. It was honest George Adams who then introduced me to you—a staunch and modest fellow whom we shall never see again."

The diary continues:

April 22, 1861. Sent letter to *World* via Harrisburg by Mr. Harbaugh. Got $50. on draft through Riggs and Corcoran with General Cameron's indorsement. Loaned $20. to Dutton of *Tribune* and took his receipt.

23. Wrote letter to *World* in A. M. P. M. rode to inspect barracks, etc., with Dutton and Adams. Intensely warm day. Government seized Railroad.

24. Started in P. M. for Chambersburg, Pa. to telegraph. Travelled night and day.

25. Got to Chambersburg at night; returned as far as Frederick in company with Mr. Shannon of Treasury Department.

26. Got to Washington. Found Sam. Milligan of the 7th, and he passed night with me.

27. Wrote and mailed long letter to *World*.

28. Attended service at Capitol and wrote *World* by special messenger.

On April 30, 1861, Stedman was suddenly recalled to New York, where for nearly a month he filled the duties as editor-in-chief of the evening *World* for Mr. Marble, whose eyes were badly injured by overwork. Apparently Stedman then considered entering army service, for he writes: "Colonel Cummings returned from Washington. Says he has secured my commission as Colonel in the regular U. S. A. Riot at St. Louis. . . . Packing to go South to War." Instead, he remained as editor in New York.

May 24, 1861, the city of Alexandria, Virginia, across the Potomac River, just below Washington, was occupied by United States troops. As Colonel Ellsworth, with his Zouave regiment, was passing the Marshall House in Alexandria he saw a secession flag flying above it. Mounting to the roof, he tore down the obnoxious emblem, and was descending the stairs with it wrapped around his body, when he was shot by the proprietor, who was in his turn immediately killed by one of the Zouaves. By sunrise the following morning Stedman was on his way to the scene of the tragedy, where the flag was divided among a group of reporters. A bit of the relic, stained with the blood of Ellsworth, was always treasured by Stedman. The death of Colonel Ellsworth was considered an event of such importance, at this early stage of the War, that he was buried from the White House with President Lincoln as chief mourner.

The next week brought a communication from Mr. Marble urging Stedman to send livelier letters with news that never got through by telegraph. This charge from his friend, as well as chief, "enraged" Stedman, who promptly returned to New York vindicating his allegiance to his office. His paper, never a thriving plant, was undergoing serious changes in its corporation, and had annexed the *Courier and Enquirer*. Its adherents were not altogether satisfied: notably among these was Richard Grant White, who wrote to Stedman of a plan which he then contemplated for a paper of his own, offering the younger man an editorial desk. In his reply, Stedman said:

> Let me postpone for a moment the question of the new paper, to explain my situation on the *World*. A few years ago, I lost my little property and my health. At the time I had succeeded in avoiding newspaper work for several preceding years, believing that it prevented me from attaining genuine literary success. I have an Uncle—William E. Dodge—who, while my parents are abroad, has been more than a father to me. He thought that I ought to resume my profession, came to me when I was adrift with my young wife and little ones, and told me if I would follow his advice, he would back me up. He has kept his word and has had the satisfaction of seeing me work hard and rise rapidly as a practical journalist. It is true that I own 4½ shares of *World*

stock, but he took it for me, in order to give me a proper status in the concern. . . .

Now, I don't know what part Mr. Dodge has taken in the affair, but I do know that he is one of the most honorable and clear-headed men alive; that although a merchant and a millionaire, he is generous and open-hearted to a fault. He scorns chicanery of any kind. Lastly, he is my best practical friend, and will look out for my interests, and for those of any one connected with them. So I have taken the liberty of sending your letter, *in confidence* to him—both as acknowledgment of my duty to him, and as my proxy to act and advise with you. If you will be so very kind as to call at 19 Cliff Street, or take dinner with him at his residence on Murray Hill, or let him know where he can see you, *you can talk with him as you would with me.* If there is a wrong, and you both think it most prudent to right it, he will see it righted *so cœlum ruat.*

Mr. Marble accompanied the official notification of my disruption from the *World* Editorial Staff with a request for me to continue as the army correspondent of the *W. C. and E.* which position I am certainly free to resign. As to your first plan, viz. for a new daily paper, I have been greatly interested in its features. The point, that now is the best time to lift a paper on its *circulation*, is a good one. The expense of telegraphing (so important a department in your plan) outside of the *Associated Press* will be frightful. This is the *only* obstacle to success, if you accept the extreme editorial *labor* required to arrange the news daily according to your views. I know that your good taste and tact would make it the handsomest sheet in the country. But if you do conclude to start a paper, rely upon it, my dear Mr. White, that the following project will do the most justice to your talent, reputation, leisure, and every other interest important to a man who has been long enough in the treadmill of daily journalism:

An 8-pp. weekly literary æsthetic and political family newspaper elegantly printed—to take critical and intellectual precedence above any journal in the States, and, withal, to be so interesting and amusing as to obtain a great circulation.

The money that would keep a daily alive six months, would sustain the weekly (and its editors) for several years. So soon as this war ends there will be a grand rush back to literature. This is the kind of paper on which I would love to join you. For it, I would leave the *managing editorship* of a daily. I am weary of the mean themes and the eternal round.

The prologue to the War was ending. Shortly Stedman was to witness sights which thrilled him the rest of his life. Writing, after long years his memories of Hancock at Williamsburg, he said: "Recollections of my service with the Army of the Potomac, as a reporter, often seem like those of a play, a stirring romance or a memorable dream. Was there, indeed, so fierce an Olympiad of blood and iron? Had I any share in its exciting turmoil? But at times I am again a young and light-hearted newspaper man, doubtless sufficiently light of head withal; a war correspondent in the Virginia campaign, longing to chronicle victories, too often forced to make the best of needless defeats; always eager to beat my friendly and able rivals of the newspaper corps. Yes; I realize often that my experiences in the field, under McDowell, McClellan and their successors, with the ceaseless fatigue and liberty and zest of action, made up something more than one of life's episodes. They lifted life out of the commonplace. They still are what I would not have missed, and what could never occur to me again. Their successive pictures formed an indestructible gallery in the brain, and still add to the worth of those memories, which, after all, constitute one's selfhood."

The first message over the army telegraph was sent by Stedman on June 20, 1861. In a letter to the *World*, written the day before, June 19th, he gives this experience at Falls Church:

> We learned from the lieutenant that the enemy's pickets were only two miles off, but that the night would probably be a quiet one; and so we walked up the hill to the woods and our hospitable Connecticut friends. Hospitable, for they gave us a portion of their quarters, and last night we slept under bush huts, without blankets or camp fires. Our proximity to the enemy forbade the building of the latter, though the night was chill, and the boys swore it was a shame to be "freezing to death like cowards in the dark." Before morning I was too cold to sleep, and, passing the

sentries, walked along the road that skirted the woods. Never were two thousand men more thoroughly concealed. The bush huts were invisible in those dark shades, and all was oppressively silent. I thought of Roderick Dhu and his heather-hidden Highlanders, and of the change which a single picket alarm would bring over that noiseless encampment. But not even a chance shot broke the stillness of the night. At last morn, in the white wake of the morning star, "came furrowing all the orient into gold." Returning to the cavalry quarters, we mounted our horses, and, glad to act as volunteer aids to Lieutenant Tompkins, rode with him at the head of his men toward the Potomac Highland, and a finer sunrise view than the Catskills know of. In front, the branches of the beautiful Potomac; miles to the right and left, the undulating oak forests of Arlington; close at hand the square intrenchments and black cannon of Fort Corcoran; while, far beyond hills and fortress and the broad silvery river, the white dome of the Capitol sparkled like a grain of salt.

Stedman, whose imagination, valor, and patriotism were thoroughly inflamed, had begged to be present at a battle: that hour was approaching. From Manassas Junction on July 17th, he wrote to his wife:

I succeeded in getting a horse at Alexandria yesterday, my other one failing me, and galloped up just in time to join the advance—with what result my letters last night and to-night to the *World* will show. I have just time to drop you a line to say that I am very well, though tired, not having slept since yesterday and eating little but corn-cake. To-night I mean to get some sleep on the stoop of a farm-house—though I'm afraid my Secession blankets, captured to-day, will give me the itch or measles.

We had a perfectly magnificent time to-day. I never enjoyed a day so much in my life. Was in the van throughout, at the head of the army, and it was exciting and dramatic beyond measure.

The next day, July 18, 1861, his diary reads: "My first battle. Witnessed the Blackburn's Ford affair. Under fire from beginning to end. Helped to right the first gun. Came out safe. My telegraphic dispatch beat the other papers."

His impression of this first experience of the actual clash of steel in combat is recorded in his "Cavalry Song":

Our good steeds snuff the evening air,
  Our pulses with their purpose tingle;
The foeman's fires are twinkling there;
  He leaps to hear our sabres jingle!
      HALT!
  Each carbine sends its whizzing ball:
  Now, cling! clang! forward all,
    Into the fight!

Dash on beneath the smoking dome,
  Through level lightnings gallop nearer.
One look to Heaven! No thoughts of home:
  The guidons that we bear are dearer.
      CHARGE!
  Cling! clang! forward all!
  Heaven help those whose horses fall!
    Cut left and right!

They flee before our fierce attack!
  They fall, they spread in broken surges!
Now, comrades, bear our wounded back,
  And leave the foeman to his dirges.
      WHEEL!
  The bugles sound the swift recall:
  Cling! clang! backward all!
    Home, and good night!

Two days later, while the army encamped and reconnoitred for a new attack, Stedman wrote to his wife:

The army moves forward again to night—part of it, at least, and I am going to accompany it. As I sent my letter to the *World* this morning, and have a spare half hour, while my horse is feeding, I think I will write you a word. I have written you several times this week, and sent a line Thursday night, after the battle, to say that I was in it throughout, but came out safe. Hill, House's assistant, got there after the fight commenced, had one ball whiz by his ear, got frightened, galloped 22 miles to Washington and there reported 500 killed, and that the "press" had fled the field. No one left but him. Mr. Raymond [Editor of the N. Y. *Times*] was with me in the hottest cannonade, and was as cool as a cucumber. My letters to the *World* tell the whole story, if they have got safely through. I sent one dispatch to Washington, to be forwarded from there by telegraph, the night of the battle. This was a column and a half long, and was so correct that I have not since been obliged to alter a word. I am in great suspense to know whether it got through. Yesterday, the 19th, I sent a letter giving more details. To-day I have written a long letter about the nature of the enemy's defences. There is great difficulty in getting anything to Washington, and you cannot imagine how worried I am about my dispatches. When you see Marble, I wish you would tell him so, and that I am sure my telegraphic dispatch was a "big thing," if it ever reached him.

It will be some time, I fear, before I shall have another such splendid opportunity of witnessing a battle. The ground was peculiarly favorable for my observation. My horse was very restive, throwing me twice—by the way, constant saddle-practice has made me a pretty fair horseman—when the heavy cannonading was going on. You never heard such frightful echoes as rang through all the hills and forest. I saw a shell pass through the back and body of one poor fellow as he was cowardly retreating up our hill. He fell forward and on it, when it exploded and blew him literally to pieces.

We move forward, as I said, to-night, but I don't think there will be much fighting as we only go a little way, probably with a view to a permanently strong position. General McDowell, I learn privately, is really afraid to put our raw troops against the enemy's batteries. He fears they will run. But I go in for a grand attack from all quarters at once. If my dispatch got through, shew it to George Arnold. I wish he was out here with me.

My health continues *excellent*. The weather is fine and not too hot. The outdoor life agrees with me exactly, and I sleep just as well on the ground as anywhere. Last night, for the first time, I had a bed to sleep in—in an old Virginian mansion—and came near getting into it with my clothes on, from force of habit. In fact this first week of marching has given me much buoyancy of feeling. If I did not have to worry about writing to the *World*, I should be perfectly happy.

The actual loss in the late engagement, no matter what the "official" reports say, is about *25 killed*, *30 wounded* and *30 missing*. The trees prevented the carnage from being greater.

From the diary:

July 21, 1861. *Battle of Bull Run.* Got up at 1 A. M. Rode in advance till battle opened at 6 A. M. Stayed in it all day and witnessed with great shame and indignation the rout at the close. Saved colors of Massachusetts Fifth. Had officer shot on my horse, as I tried to bring him off the field. Got to Washington at 2 A. M. Monday.

In 1906, Mr. Stedman was glad to write an account of this momentous experience:

It gives me pleasure to pay a tribute to the energy and courage of the (then) young Uriah H. Painter, who was my companion in the retirement from the Bull Run battlefield on the afternoon of Sunday, July 21st, and on the homeward ride to Washington, which we reached together somewhat before sunrise in the morning of July 22nd. Painter was made of iron; having in some way lost his own horse he succeeded in capturing one of the enemy's horses, that had escaped into our line with a halter around his neck, and a bullet hole through his hip. On this horse he rode with me (who had saved my own animal, and who had been in the saddle almost incessantly from midnight before the battle) to Washington. I recall as a curious incident, which struck me as being rather dramatic and a good deal like a criminal counting the flies while death sentence is being pronounced, that Quartermaster General Meigs met us as we were approaching the Potomac Heights. He was a solitary horseman going out for news from the field. We told him of the defeat, and his only reply was to ask Painter where he got the horse; on being informed he said, rather sternly, "Turn him into the Government corral as soon as you get to Washington." I advised Painter to do nothing of the kind, since if the rebels knew enough to follow up our retreat there would soon be no Government corral in Washington; and so we proceeded on our way to town.

We were both anxious to forward our respective, and true, reports—mine to the New York *World*, and Painter's to the Philadelphia *Inquirer*—as soon as possible; and we learned on arriving in Washington, first, that the North believed we had won a victory at Bull Run, and second, that the first train to Philadelphia would leave—if I remember rightly—about nine o'clock,

A. M. I am quite sure that Painter took that train, but, as it was then a day's journey to Philadelphia under the existing conditions, I don't see how he could have reached there much before evening. Doubtless he at once telegraphed a brief summary of the disastrous news to the *Inquirer*, and, for all I know, to J. Cook. I believe that he was the telegraphic reporter for the *Inquirer* as well as its only army letter writer. I know that his letter describing the defeat, which appeared in the *Inquirer* of Tuesday morning, although of course full of many errors, made quite a sensation, though it had been preceded by a telegraphic statement on Monday. My own letter, several times longer than Painter's, and far more inclusive, did not appear in the *World* until Wednesday morning; even then it was the first logical, comprehensive, and definitive story of the battle that had been given to the public, and its reception secured my position as a journalist and made amends to my newspaper for its tardiness. Meantime, my telegraphic army correspondent, Mr. Adams, had kept the *World* readers properly informed by wire.

Though not pertinent to your question, I will add that while Painter on Monday morning was rugged enough to keep at work and go to Washington, I ventured to retire for an hour's sleep at the National Hotel, leaving strict orders that I should be called for seven o'clock breakfast, and in time to take the train. They neglected to call me, and when I awoke it was somewhat dark and raining, and my watch showed me it was half past six; I dressed hastily, and went down, as I supposed, to breakfast, and found that dinner was on! The truth was that, owing to absolute exhaustion, I had slept for twelve hours without dream or sense of time. Of course I was horribly chagrined, but could only take the night train to New York. My rest, however, had set me up splendidly, and enabled me to write all night on the journey, and as much more at the *World* office on Tuesday, so that my account of the battle covered a whole page, and thoroughly satisfied my superiors.

"I forget," says R. H. Stoddard, "whether Stedman's letters excelled those of other correspondents for accuracy, but they certainly excelled them in spirit.

"He was at the first battle of Bull Run, where the North was routed, as we all remember. Other correspondents sent letters to their papers about it, but none came from him.

"'Where is he?' his friends asked; but nobody knew.

"Two, or perhaps three, days passed before he returned to New York. The next day there appeared in the *World* a long and graphic letter about the lost battle which he had witnessed,—a letter which was the town's talk for days. Altogether it was the best single letter written during the whole War."

In the letter which Mr. Painter sent to the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, July 23, 1861, he says:

> The enemy appeared in sight, firing their guns, the balls raining upon us thick. Emerging from the valley we saw the reporter of the *World*, with the standard of the Massachusetts Fifth, waving it over him and pleading for the men to rally around him, but it was in vain; they heeded him not. An officer asked the privilege of riding behind him. It was granted, and before they had gone a hundred yards a shot from the thicket struck the officer in the head and he reeled off. Mr. Stedman wrapped up the standard and galloped about a mile ahead, and afterwards succeeded in rallying a large force.
>
> In the edge of the woods we noticed Mr. Villard, of the New York *Herald*, trying to pacify the men, telling them it was only a panic.

Stedman's friends considered that he had acquitted himself heroically, and sent him gratifying messages. "Sted," wrote C. B. Conant, "we're all proud of you. Ludlow *just cried* when he read of your brave thing with the flag."

Richard Grant White wrote:

> I congratulate you upon your admirable description of our hapless attack upon Manassas. It is much, very much, the best letter that has yet come from the war. But this comparative praise is far below its merits. Its clearness, its scope, its systematic arrangements, and its unpretending picturesqueness are positive qualities in which it is excelled by few letters of the kind known to me—in fact I will only except one or two of Russell's from the Crimea. It is rarely that a description of a battle enables one to

> see it; but yours does; it is still more rarely that to this essential quality there is added that literary merit which makes description of complicated events easy reading; but you have attained this combination.
>
> And what, too, shall I say to the man who restored a regiment their colors! What can the Massachusetts Fifth do that is enough for you! Most heartily I congratulate you again. You have glory enough for one day.

A wide demand for the account sprang up. Rudd & Carleton seized their opportunity, and issued on August 1, 1861, Stedman's spirited letter in a pamphlet, of which thousands were sold at ten cents a copy. In the single number [1] which Mr. Stedman finally retained, there appears this note made August 1, 1904:

> The early correspondents, of whom I was one, knew nothing of military life, tactics, modern warfare. As this was the first *extended* letter of the War, and one that undertook to describe the largest battle this country yet had known, it is naturally full of the rumors and misstatements of the 21st and 22nd of July. We pioneers were *creating* the profession of the War Correspondent in America, and this, in spite of the sensation which it produced, was prentice work. But for synthetic quality, topographical comprehension, and as a bit of effective English narrative, it is not so bad for a greenhorn of twenty-seven?

There was a cessation of hostilities during the days following the Battle of Bull Run which afforded Stedman only such news as the "Morale of the Army," and its Sanitary Conditions, with comments on the passing hours at Washington. The last of August, receiving his pass across the river, Stedman took up permanent quarters near Fort Albany, thence making long horseback rides to gather army intelligence, and to send such a picture as this to his Northern patrons:

> The æsthetic element cannot be banished from religion. Beauty, goodness and truth are forever woven together. And thus the

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[1] "In this age of book-collecting," says Mr. Stedman, "as high as fourteen dollars has been paid for a copy."

soldierly camp, placed in perfect Sunday cleanliness and order, becomes for the first time a fitting tabernacle of the Lord. Thus, the Sunday evening parade, with all its beautiful harmonies of motion and intervolution—its graces of dress and equipment—its tenderness of music—its surroundings of sunset-glorified forest, valley and stream—its thousand silent lookers-on, thoughtful of the past, present and future—thus it becomes the truest exponent which our soldiers can offer of the sentiment which visits even camps to lift men heavenward. And when the sun is most radiantly sinking to the death from which we know he is to rise again—when the shadows fall longest on earth, and skyey armies throw out their most lustrous banners of crimson, purple and gold—the bugles of a hundred regiments commence their echoing evening anthems among the near and far-off valleys.

The music close at hand has so deep a resonance, and those strains from the distant vistas blend so softly and melodiously, each in turn overflowing the tidal waves of the rest, that celestial answers, uttering higher joy, seem to come back from hosts which are marching through those lusters of the zenith. I have read of the worship which rises, like a cloud, to the Swiss herdsmen's "music slowly breathed," when the *Ranz des vaches* is heard in Alpine fastnesses, inspiring and repeating the simple reverence of those pious mountain-dwellers. With an effect the same in kind—yet broader in its embraces and suggestions—these volumes of solemn sound rise at sunset from all the empanoplied hills about the capital. For a while the legions seem to forget their deadly mission, and the little pomp and armament of mortal men. They see the serener glory of the Power above us all.

At such times I imagine there are soldiers in the regiment before me, whose hearts interpret into grandest language the bursts of melody from the band which slowly marches up and down the statuesque sequence of the line. Looking at the splendor of the illuminated clouds, they hear the trumpets uttering such words as these:

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors! and the King of Glory shall come in."

Then comes a questioning response from hill-sides far away: "Who is this King of Glory?" Hark! where a chorus is gathered from slope and valley and the multitudinous plain which reaches below us to the rivers on either side:

The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. . . . The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory!

And the ennobling refrain passes from camp to camp till the evening gun closes the music and the day. The thousand men before you, more neatly dressed than at any other time, go through with simple and beautiful exactitude the order of their exercise at arms. A hush pervades the field. Soldiers and spectators alike are silent, soothed to thoughts of that higher life, and memories of loved worshippers far away. When the parade is dismissed, the tents are occupied, and sentries take up their guards, with a stillness and tranquillity peculiar to this evening of the week. With pleasant thoughtfulness the townspeople move slowly homeward. Shadows grow dark about grove and camp and the visible quiet city. "Then stars arise and the night is holy."

The magical color and poetry of similar scenes made Stedman yearn for the brush of a painter, and caused him to remark: "Where were Church and Coleman, and the rest, during those early Virginia encampments? Who ever saw such atmosphere? It was the light and glory of elfland."

But wreaths of opaline cloud o'erhang, by day,
The crystal-pointed tents, from hill to hill,
From vale to vale—until
The heavens on endless peaks their curtain lay.

These weeks brought Stedman pleasant diversions in a brief visit from his wife and children, and in escorting Bayard Taylor, N. P. Willis, and other friends through the intrenchments, or to witness the grand cavalry and artillery reviews at the Capitol.

On the morning of October 1st, he started upon a long trip up the Potomac River. Writing, the following night, to his wife, he says:

The idea of leaving dismayed me at first, as my clothing is not very suitable and the weather is cold . . . but since getting under way I feel much better and braver. Yesterday was delightful. I made a long journey. You will see an account of it in my letter, and also of my hospitable night entertainment at the camp of the

Massachusetts 12th. To-day the cold rain has made me experience the want of an india-rubber or woolen overcoat. My leggings protect my black pants (the only thick ones I have) but my coat is thin and leaky. However, by halting when it rained, I got along pretty well, and am feeling excellently to-night, though in a strange house and rather lonely.

Handed my letter of introduction to General Banks this P. M. He received me courteously and invited me to call, etc. He is by all odds the most impressive man, in countenance, language and demeanor, whom I have seen since the war commenced. If my instinct does not deceive me, he's abler in many ways than McClellan and will make a great general.

How long I shall stay here, I don't know,—probably not many days. Continue to send letters to Washington, as usual. I came here for three reasons: 1st: Because I expected this column might cross the river. 2d: To deliver a letter to Colonel Van Alen [James H. Van Alen of General Dix's Staff.] from Bayard Taylor, requesting him to give me his influence with Judge Bates. . . . It's lonely enough here; few acquaintances meeting me. The monotony of the encampments is insufferable; one regiment acts, talks and looks just like another—and all like Yankees. When they fight I shall be glad. Ed. Underhill is somewhere up here. I saw him for a moment to-day. He says Molly is going to Washington. I am very anxious about Freddy's health. Dress him in flannel all over, see that he eats plenty of wholesome food and takes exercise; and I hope the dear little fellow'll get fat.

To his Wife.

Near Baker's Camp, 4 Miles North of Poolesville, Md.,
October 5, 1861.

The country and climate here are delightful and my health has sensibly improved. If I had you here to ride around with me and see this novel life, I could be contented to spend the Fall season. You could get no idea of the army or camp-life from what you saw in Washington. I ride all over the field, getting milk at one farm-house and dinner at another, sleep one night in camp with hills, the next at a village tavern or private house. The river is close by, and to-morrow I am going to visit the upper pickets. I learn that Underhill went up there to-day, but don't think his letters will amount to much. If Marble has received the last six

I have sent, they must have pleased him for I have taken great pains with them. I shall probably not return to Washington till the middle of next week. Am disappointed in not meeting Colonel Van Alen. He left for Buffalo just before I arrived at his camp, and is not soon expected back. Think I shall tackle Judge Bates as soon as I return with what letters I have. Ellis sent me a fine lot, and I have some from Uncle W[illiam], including one from Daniel Lord, Esq.

September 26, 1861, Stedman commenced the following letter to his mother, in Italy, which he concluded October 16th:

Yours of June 28th reached me on the battle-field of Bull Run, whither it was brought by my cousin, as I told you in my line accompanying the description of the battle. I took it, left the action for a moment, sat down behind a huge oak tree to be safe from shot and shell, and read your arguments against the fight then raging. Then I went back and fought a little more earnestly than before.

. . . .

You see, dear Mama, that 'tis now three weeks' since the above was written, and I've half a mind not to let it go—since what good can it do and why distress you needlessly. Consider it as the cry of a seared soul, whose old wound reopens in weaker moments, and is now again healthily closed.

I was called away—to take a ten days' experience of camp-life—before I could finish the letter and now resume it, having returned in better health than before. And now it is impossible for me to tell you of this busy summer just closed. If you received the *World*—and I should have esteemed it a cheap luxury for you—you would have read every day a faithful record of your son's doings and wanderings. My letters have been regular and very full. In fact, I have gone into the conspectus and detail of the campaign more thoroughly than any writer in the country, and have succeeded in keeping an author's name before the public (on whom we depend for our support) even in war-times. Have visited every department of the army; studied all military matters with some pleasant enthusiasm; am acquainted with every leading officer, etc., and, I think, welcomed and respected everywhere. So much on the bright side. The change has certainly been good for my good name and health. Of course all suffer pecuniarily, except the thousands making large fortunes in supplies for our immense army. See what one pays for being a gentleman! Even these regimental sutlers make from $1000. to $5000. per month.

But as cold weather comes on I begin to long for home-life and dread camp-exposures. This feeling, however, always passes off, when the town is twenty-four hours behind and one is actually campaigning. This waiting for the "advance" is deteriorating. Fortunately I shall not have to wait another month. Our army, totally reorganized in the short space of three months, is now just *six* times stronger—infantry, artillery and cavalry—than before McDowell's campaign. We have the same ground as then, and, taken alltogether, that absurd affair was the best thing which could have happened to us. We are now ready to strike grand blows and the crisis is close at hand. Half-a-million of men are fronting each other. That the opponents have not yet come in collision is not from cowardice, but wisdom. They were not armies, but masses of men, and have necessarily kept themselves quiet, intrenching opposite each other, and *learning the soldier's trade*. They have learned it, foreigners here now confess, sooner than did ever any other people in history.

Meantime pardon me for saying that I have attentively studied your and Mary's echoes of the family oracle's views on the war question, and think you do not have the slightest appreciation of the real points at issue. You need not take my notions for anything more than they are worth, but I am going, contrary to my usual habit, to give you some reasons for what you call my "enthusiasm." Premise that I am angry with myself for doing so, since first, what is the use? Why trouble one's self with writing and arguing when no bread-and-butter are to be gained thereby? Why should I care what you think about it? and second, is it possible in a few lines, to make the issue clear to your mind? I think not; yet will make a few statements, without proving them, from which your own judgment may reason out the whole.

I have enlisted all my humble energies in this cause, then, for two reasons: First, one of selfishness—the necessity for personal shaking-up and *rejuvenating*—the old, *healthy* love of *action* rising in me, as described in the first part of the "Flood Tide;" the credit and reputation to be derived, and the subsistence earned, by my present occupation—the love of adventure, etc. Second, one of principle. I am really surprised to find myself sometimes forgetting self, and feeling human love and heart-throbs and patriotism. I think the War right and noble. For the first time, the hackneyed stars-and-stripes have to me a significance. With the half-million noble and more simple-hearted men who are fighting for their country, I think that "the individual lessens and the cause is more and more." For eight years I have cared *nothing* for politics—have been disgusted with American life and doings. Now, for the first time, I am proud of my country and my grand, heroic brethren. The greatness of the crisis, the Homeric grandeur of the contest, surrounds and elevates us all. See what it is:

i. *A complete revolution and renovation of all the customs and constitution of Americans North and South. A.* One million of the late emasculate Americans are put under magnificent hygienic training. Strong men and noble will henceforth inherit the land. *B.* The base passions attendant upon scheming and money-grubbing are laid aside for simple, chivalric, national love and hate, and henceforth the sentimental and poetic will fuse with the intellectual to dignify and elevate our race. The pride, pomp and *circumstance* of glorious war, and the big contests, *do* make ambition, virtue; and all *here*, *on the spot*, *see* that even bloodshed doeth its own good work. Men, that we once despised as small politicians, loafers, traders and what-not, are having all the good and heroic in them developed—are brightly transformed amid these altered scenes and nobler motives. *C.* Thousands of men of real talent, *born soldiers*, for whom in this country there has been no use hitherto, and who have consequently been "black-sheep," gamblers, vagabonds and loafers, are now finding their legitimate calling—shooting back into their natural spheres. Suppose, there was no such thing as literature—what would fellows like myself do but be vagabonds and proletarians? Just so with your late fillibusters.

ii. *The War is a duty on the part of the North.* It is not waged by abolitionists, is *not* the result of abolitionism. We are not sure but that slavery is a very good thing in the Cotton states. In other latitudes I see for myself that it is good enough for the negroes, but ruinous to the whites. There is a theory, that the Virginia and Kentucky gentry own slaves; this is false: I have seen for myself that the *niggars own the gentry.* Now I wish to make you and Mary understand that, although we see that this War will probably settle the slavery question, and possibly forever limit slavery to the Cotton states, *yet we are not fighting the negro's cause.* Slavery has been the cause of the War in no sense other than that it has added another distinctness to the line betwixt North and South which climate and race had already drawn. The real cause of the War is a bitter and criminal hatred, entertained by the South against the North, and based on other than slave interests. For fifty years the *character* of Southerners has become daily more domineering, insolent, irrational, haughty, scornful of justice. They have so long cracked their whips over negroes that they now assume a certain inherent right to crack them over *white men;* assume the positive rights of a superior race; and have taken advantage of the North's desire for quiet and peace to impose upon us without stint. For years the tone of their actions and speeches, in Congress and society has expressed this sentiment and determination. Even Southern students at College, when I was at Yale, adopted the same tactics. One hundred of them—poor scholars, but blustering with rum and bowie-knives—lorded it over four hundred studious New Englanders, simply because the latter *were* studious and desired to attain the objects aimed at in a collegiate course. At length the thing became degrading, and we arose one day and kicked them all out. For fifty years the same plan has been practised on a larger scale in our national affairs. The South, assisted by Northern merchants whom it has governed, has been true enough to the Union, so long as every election gave *it* the power, and as foreign missions, army and navy commissions, presidencies, etc., were held in its own hands. But the census of 1850 shewed that the enterprising and industrious North was getting the balance of power. Then the South began to rebel and would have seceded had not the Clay compromise taken away *its sole pretext.* Now the census of 1860, and the Lincoln election have revived *both the desire and the pretext*, and it *has* seceded. To give you an illustration of my meaning: The South and the North have been like a large and small boy at school—the former thrashing the latter without mercy for years, and the latter constitutionally submitting to the joke; now the North has grown big enough to lick the South and has done it for the first time—whereupon the irrational South gets angry and secedes. Slavery furnishes a plausible pretext. That's all. If the slaves should now rebel, as they probably will, and commit atrocities, we should probably *unite with the South* to save our white brothers and sisters—but should then insist on the cause of such horrors being forever removed, *for the sake of the white man.*

iii. *Right, power, and noble sentiments being on our side, it is our duty to carry on the War.* The South took active part in last Fall's election, thereby pledging itself to acquiesce in the result, and now *breaks* its pledge. The South has attacked the North; the South commenced the War; the South proceeded from domineering in Congress to actual hostilities, and I say that the North ignored the necessity of fighting for a period that became almost degrading. You would perhaps like to have Northerners turn themselves into spittoons at once. Why, I was so indignant at the *too* long-suffering of the North, that I seriously thought of disowning my country and going to Canada or England to live. Tell your husband that if the Union is to be shattered at the will of a minority, we might as well give up the idea of nationality at once, disown patriotism and let all go to pieces. That nation is noblest which is most sensitive about its own integrity, and will shed the most blood for a *principle*, and noble nations make noble individual men.

For such reasons I think the War of 1861 a benefit to both North and South, a duty on the part of the North, and please God, it shall be pushed to the true end. For one I have no objection to let the South go, and hope they will; but the dignity of right must first be sustained, and the injury to the republic avenged, and *they must ask to go in the proper way.* They might easily have effected a peaceful separation, by petition and vote, years ago. But that course would not have elevated Davis and the other ambitious men, now deluding their brave but senseless followers. And if we should now make peace, without proving our determination, power and heroism, we should forever hereafter be the world's laughing stock and the white slaves of our Southern neighbors.

You have lived so long away, and remained as it were, stationary in knowledge of our affairs, that the whole character of America has whirled ten years by you and become transformed into necessities and emotions that you fail to comprehend.

Now don't say anything more against the War without first reading over this letter and seeing if I have not answered it.

Since writing the first part of this letter, I have received your's to Laura stating that my account of the battle had reached you, and also that my letter had reached Clem. I wait ardently for the latter's picture. Dear Mary's is always with me. You all speak of exposures in this contest. I have found it impossible to get clear ideas of a battle without being more or less under fire; that's all. Have written many better letters than the Bull Run one, but that hit the public heart and made a sensation. It has since been published in book-form. Of course the London *Times* rejoices over the disruption of the fagot of sticks, a drubbing from which England has so long dreaded. America will always henceforth be a military power; drills will constitute the physical training in our schools, and the science of arms will be one of our polite accomplishments. So soon as this fight is over, we propose to shoot ahead of Great Britain in arms, navies, art, literature, health, and all other elements and appendages of national greatness.

Let me thank you for your touching and long account of the death of Mrs. Browning, your *mélange* of foreign gossip, account of your own feelings and prospect, etc. You need be in no trouble about your income. Business is reviving everywhere. The railroads were never making so much money. The North has this year paid the entire expenses of the war in *decrease of importations* and *increase of crops for exportation.* We need not borrow one cent abroad. I assure you that we do not expect, unless the war is prolonged beyond 1862, to experience any of the pecuniary hardships of such contests.

Your prospect of passing the winter in Rome—perhaps at the Baths—but, at least, of not returning to Florence, I hear as the voice of one speaking to me in my dreams; with melancholy cognizance and indifference. What interest have I in it all. I cannot roam through those ruins; can never teach my sisters to long for my footsteps, and delight in my converse. Through all this summer, I have been careless in the midst of excitement; uninterested and lonely among hosts of friends and scenes in which I take no interest. Though writing and publishing, my work is not the *kind* I have always longed in vain to do; the women who love me are not those I could love the best; the stirring scenes about me are listless, without my heart's-blood, my mother and sisters, and brother to be with me and see them. O that I had wings! O that you could come to us or we to you. Must I forever give up my darling pursuits, my dearest loves? Do you talk, live and love, mechanically, as I do, just as you eat your meals?

The only consolation which I had on October 8th, when I was 28 years old—and when I looked back as usual, to see how much I had advanced during the year—was that I felt certain I had added five years to my physical endurance by this summer's out-door life, and so can afford to have wasted the year. Then I have acquired new material for future imaginative writing to be based on.

This long letter is of course (being to you—to the girls I write of other matters) about what my mother most wishes to hear of, viz. myself. You are the only one on earth to whom I speak of *I* and *me*. Now do you want to hear of my money matters and prospects, etc.? Well then: Laura has remained in New York and neighborhood all summer, drawing my little salary—the *World* paying my expenses here. The *World* has come near smashing to pieces, but revived, after wiping out the old stock—we all paid in again, and the paper now is more popular, etc., than any in New York, and will pay, I think, though 'tis very poor. They are much pleased with my performance this year, the stockholders voted that I had saved the paper and I receive great liberty and kindness at their hands. But they cannot afford to pay half as much as I have been offered, and can *now command*, from other papers, and nothing but dread of change and love of my associate editors, keeps me on this sheet—when I am half-starving. But I had a double purpose in my mind in coming to Washington, viz., besides what I've already unfolded, to keep my eyes open for political and literary influence. Have made many distinguished acquaintances, kept in the best circles only and been, on the whole, well received. Have declined, on your account and Laura's, offers of Colonel's and Major's commissions for the War, but now think of securing a berth which will keep me four years in Washington. Briefly, as follows. It is the third position in the Attorney General's [Judge Bates] office, at $1600. per annum. 'Twill confine me but half the day, and give me time—First, to add another $1500. to my income, by writing for New York papers as Washington correspondent. Second, to finish *that* novel and *that* volume of poems, and get along faster in my cherished plans—Third, being, for the first time, easy in finances, able to buy my children's and wife's stockings and my own coat, to dabble a little in society and diplomacy, and perhaps make some money, place and other worldly and vile attainments. Assistant Attorney-General Coffey has taken a notion to me and become my patron and I think there is a likelihood of my getting fixed as above. Two things hinder: regret at leaving N. Y. and living in this vile, corrupt and tasteless town; fear lest I may fail to keep up my present N. Y. literary influence and become forgotten and submerged. But be sure, dear Mama, that I will try to act for the best, and am selfish and worldly enough to suit your maternal views.

If I don't succeed, I may lecture on the War as soon as its over. . . .

Mrs. Stoddard has a novel ready. She is a woman of genius, and loves her friends, but is a good hater, also, and I wouldn't offend her for a deal.

Speaking of the girls' marriages; you have no idea how American young men have improved in manner, breeding and looks, on previous editions. They can marry better and more congenially here, than abroad.

I enclose the "Old Love and New," published last May. I don't know when I can write you again. The army is now in position—right, left and center—175,000 strong, and will move in a few days. I shall probably accompany it. This letter is quite an episode from my usual military life. If I could throw aside literary ambition, a soldier's life would suit me above all else. General McClellan says that my knowledge of military matters and movements is surprising. I wish you and the girls could take some horseback rides with me through our twenty miles of forts and encampments. . . . Your happiness and appreciation are more precious to me than a hundred reviews. . . .

Dear Clem and Mary—A brother's love to you both. Stand up for the North in your parlor talk.

Of his activities during the following weeks we may judge from these entries in his diary:

October 19, 1861. Went to Baltimore to visit Ft. McHenry, Major General Dix and Lieutenant Barstow.

20. At Ft. McHenry. Inspected works on Federal and Munsey Hills.

21. Wrote *World*. Returned to Washington. Banks and Stone cross Potomac to-day and General Baker killed.

24. Started for scene Battle of Ball's Bluff, rode 45 miles.

25. Rode 40 miles investigating Ball's Bluff disaster. Have got bilious remittent fever.

26. To Washington 45 miles. Am sick with fever.

27. To-day wrote 6 columns. Only accurate and synthetic account late battle. Wrote with napkin on my head. Now go to bed and be sick.

30. Fever left me to-day.

31. Made acquaintance lately of *Poets* and *Authors*—W. D. Howells—Consul to Venice—catholic taste and intellect. . . . J. J. Piatt, O'Connor—author of "Harrington." Eldredge—publisher.

The entry of October 31st is of peculiar interest, marking as it does the beginning of a lifelong friendship between Stedman and W. D. Howells. The preceding May, Stedman had received this letter:

COLUMBUS, OHIO.

DEAR SIR:

I'm very glad to have heard from you, and count it a very fortunate letter I wrote, since it at least brings us acquainted on paper. I've made a point of reading you whenever I found you in print; and Mr. [P. W.] Huntington has frequently spoken of you to me. But I did not know you were "on" the *World*, and merely ventured to send my letter to that journal, because I conceived that some kind notices the *World* had given me, conferred the right to bore it with a bad manuscript, if it went no further than that.—Another letter accompanies this note, which you may use at discretion. And if it is desirable I can inform you from time to time of our affairs here.—That is, if I stay here, which is not certain. That treadmill concern, the wheel of fortune, has not lifted me to the noble height of being above "wretched meat and drink," and I feel it my duty to make my living somewhere else, if I can't here.

I have journalized for four or five years, and know something of political and other writing; and it occurs to me that perhaps the *World* is not so full, but that I could sell occasional articles to it, or even make some regular engagement.

You see, the fact is I want to live in New York, and would go there, if I thought I could get anything to do.

> Pardon me for troubling you with this; you could not have foreseen that your friendly note would have led to business, and I hope that I am decently ashamed. I told Mr. Huntington what you wished.
>
> Very sincerely yours,
> W. D. Howells.

P. W. Huntington, for many years a banker in Columbus, to whom Mr. Howells refers, though younger than Stedman, had been his friend since boyhood, their early Norwich homes being only "eighty rods apart." Mr. J. J. Piatt, in writing of this early meeting, says:

> Huntington came to see me, introducing himself, and told me that Howells and I, with himself, had met Stedman in Columbus at the time he came [1857], accompanying the body of Dr. Kane, the Arctic explorer. Mr. Howells and I have been in correspondence as to this meeting. Mr. Howells thinks it is a mistake, but if he happened to meet Stedman then, casually, introduced possibly as a newspaper reporter or correspondent, not yet recognized as a poet, he might easily have forgotten. Howells was my guest, at Washington, in September, 1861. He came home from the city one evening (we lived a mile west of the White House, in Georgetown—now Washington, N. W.), and told me he had happened to meet Stedman, whom we then knew from his first volume of verse, his "Diamond Wedding," "How Old Brown Took Harper's Ferry," etc., and how pleased he had been. He added that Stedman expressed a wish to meet me also, and said, "I hope you'll go and call on him; he is at the Ebbitt House." The very next morning, accordingly, I called, finding E. C. S. in bed, in dressing gown and fez, sitting up and smoking. Immediately, he handed me a brief letter of introduction, which Howells had written and given him. Before I left, Stedman's old friend Ike Bromley called and I was introduced to him. Howells and I thus made our first acquaintance with Stedman within twenty-four hours of one another.

In his *Literary Friends and Acquaintance* Mr. Howells says:

> I had already met, in my first sojourn at the capital, a young journalist who had given hostages to poetry, and whom I was

very glad to see and proud to know. Mr. Stedman and I were talking over that meeting the other day, and I can be surer than I might have been without his memory, that I found him at a friend's house, where he was nursing himself for some slight sickness, and that I sat by his bed while our souls launched together into the joyful realms of hope and praise. In him I found the quality of Boston, the honor and passion of literature, and not a mere pose of the literary life; and the world knows without my telling how true he has been to his ideal of it. His earthly mission then was to write letters from Washington for the New York *World*, which started in life as a good young evening paper, with a decided religious tone, so that the *Saturday Press* could call it the *Night-blooming Serious.* I think Mr. Stedman wrote for its editorial page at times, and his relation to it as a Washington correspondent had an authority which is wanting to the function in these days of perfected telegraphing. . . .

His fame was still before him when we met, and I could bring to him an admiration for work which had not yet made itself known to so many but any admirer was welcome. We talked of what we had done, and each said how much he liked certain things of the other's; I even seized my advantage of his helplessness to read him a poem of mine which I had in my pocket; he advised me where to place it. . . .

Of course I liked him, and I thought him very handsome and fine, with a full beard cut in the fashion he has always worn it, and with poet's eyes lighting an aquiline profile. Afterwards, when I saw him afoot, I found him of a worldly splendor in dress, and envied him, as much as I could envy him anything, the New York tailor whose art had clothed him; I had a New York tailor too, but with a difference. He had a worldly dash along with his supermundane gifts, which took me almost as much, and all the more because I could see that he valued himself nothing upon it. He was all for literature, and for literary men as the superiors of every one. I must have opened my heart to him a good deal, for when I told him how the newspaper I had written for from Canada and New England had ceased to print my letters, he said, "Think of a man like ——— sitting in judgment on a man like *you!*" I thought of it, and was avenged if not comforted; and at any rate I liked Stedman's standing up so stiffly for the honor of a craft that is rather too limp in some of its votaries.

Recently, Mr. Howells said: "Stedman was very cordial and simple. I stood very much in awe of him, as I should of Lowell or of Longfellow. He was already a man of reputation as a poet and a scholar, which was uncommon among the literary men of my generation. He was about the only College man, as they called him then, he would be called a University man now, among us. Neither Aldrich, Stoddard, nor Taylor, nor any of our contemporaries were educated men, we were self educated. He was a scholar, a Yale man, and he had the training of a University. . . . He got some material taken for the *World* from me. I think I wrote one or two editorials, and he got me five dollars a column for them, which was a big price. We talked a good deal about the literary situation in New York, and Stedman must have given me letters to the Stoddards and other people there. . . . Stedman was one of a group of literary men in Washington, but in reputation and literary standing he was far beyond any of them. There were John Hay and John Nicolay, William D. O'Connor, who was one of the Baconian theorists as against Shakespeare, and also a great admirer of Walt Whitman. Stedman and myself exchanged views about various people, and we agreed substantially about Whitman: that Whitman's work was like a fine morning, the materials for poetry, but not poetry, and that his wilful disregard of form was a mistake."

Stedman did give Howells a letter of introduction to Stoddard, and this is the separate note which he sent to the elder poet:

> Howells will call on you, *en route* for the Rialto and St. Marks. Have made his acquaintance and find him almost the only young man, except yourself, thoroughly conscientious and catholic in literature. He is wonderfully mature for his years . . . more like Aldrich. I loved him in an hour and so will you.

. . . .

> Government has stopped the *World* to-night and talks of interfering with me, because I got angry about Ball's Bluff and told the truth.

These days of meeting friends who were to remain his staunch allies were happy ones for Stedman. Writing to John Hay, towards the close of that full life, he recalls him as, "that rosy-cheeked Antinous, whom I first met a-walking with Bob Lincoln in 1861, and, like Panurge when he met Pantagruel, have 'loved ever since'!"

The battle-field, also, was productive in friendships, and those days dark with peril were lightened by the untiring impulsive enthusiasm of youth. "Do you remember," says E. H. House to Stedman in 1881, "our writing by the light of a candle stuck in a broken bottle half full of powder?—Do you remember getting cross, and letting fly furiously at me across the same table, about something I never did understand?"

In an address before the *Press Club*, in his last years, Stedman says:

> Just before the Spanish War actually began, I met Henry Villard on the curb in Broad Street. He was limping with something like rheumatism, but his eye flashed when he said: "Look here., E. C, you and I must get into shape, and put on the harness again as war correspondents." Now, the first time I met Henry Villard was on the field of Bull Run, near the Stone Bridge, about the hour of the morning when the sun gets over the farm-yard. In fact, he fell down from a tree, which he had climbed for a better outlook, and landed—a long, thin, sprawling man in blue—between Ward, the *Harper* artist, House of the *Tribune*, and myself. He was rather shaken up, and we all exchanged drinks, the sun being where it was, and no water in sight except under fire. House had no horse, and $30. a week from the *Tribune*, and I had $25. a week, and one horse from the *World*. I told Mr. Villard, in Broad Street, that he was too lame and rich for service; but that he had better secure me for the *Post* at $250. a week, and expenses, and I would show the new men how to do it—and make it a paying investment,—as an offset to the sentinels of the brevier page."

Arthur Lumley, one of the Civil War artists for *Frank Leslie's*, recalls that Mr. Stedman was vibrant with the excitement and adventure of his experiences, utterly absorbed in the national conflict until his *World* letter was finished, then he effervesced with boyish fun and ardor. He would meet his war mates at various camps, where they would play cards, tell stories, have horse-races, and genuine frolics. Stedman is remembered as witty and extremely entertaining. A favorite *rendez-vous* was at the quarters of Colonel Dutassy, of the Garibaldi Guards, whose good Hungarian wine flowed freely, and whose career ended with his being sent to Sing Sing prison, which called forth his remark to his keeper: "This is no place for a man who speaks five different languages!" "We speak only one language here," replied the guard, "and we want d—— little of that."

Other fellow-correspondents whom Stedman met were Charles Henry Webb, Thomas Nast, George Alfred Townsend, A. H. Byington, Junius Henri Browne, and Whitelaw Reid, although it was not until 1862, that the "absolutely unbroken friendship" commenced, which existed ever after between Stedman and Reid.

November, 1861, found Stedman removing his wife and children from The Phalanx in New Jersey to quarters in Washington, where the days of work and national anxiety were generously flavored by "evening parties," theaters, and visits from friends continually arriving at the capital. He also had the pleasure of arranging with the *World* for special letters from his brother Charles, then living in Aspinwall in the service of the Panama Railway Company; and, as usual, Stedman was watchful of opportunities for his friends. "It was so kind and brotherly of you," writes Mrs. Fitz-Hugh Ludlow, "to think of Fitz's taking House's place, and still more thoughtful to write him about it. There's something about you, Stedman, that one doesn't find in every man—something that I like and respect amazingly." "Wilson writes me," says Mrs. Stoddard, "how kind and good you are to him. Do you think that I shall not thank you for that?"

Just at this hour came a gratifying occurrence, which Stedman relates to his wife:

Some good angel watches over us. If ever a man needed $50, it is I, at this perplexing moment. Well, yesterday P. M., Colonel R. told me that General James, of rifled-cannon notoriety, wanted to see me at his office. Going there, I found that he (James) had been greatly pleased at some little sentence in my Ball's Bluff letter in which his cannon was mentioned as having done some service, and wished to put $50 at my disposal. You may be sure I was never more surprised in my life—since I had just said "Oh for $50!" but was not aware that we had the least claim to the gratitude of anybody. Well: I took his agent's name and shall next week draw for the amount, and it will materially aid us in moving. Isn't it odd? Of course he expects me to keep a lookout for his guns hereafter, and I believe I can do so with a clear conscience.

From the diary:

December 3, 1861. In answer to letter from Attorney-General Bates I called last night at his house. He offered me clerkship ($1,400). Seeing the probable demise of the *World*, hoping to double my income by correspondence, and to *get time to resume literature*, I accepted it, and am now an exile in this dreary turmoil of Washington for the next three years.

6. Congress in session this week. The Emancipation question will be decided *for the right*, this session. The mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small.

13. Wrote R. G. White and also letter of introduction for Mr. Pollak to Messrs. White and Ellis. Trying for connection with *Times* and *Tribune*. Bet Captain Teiakoff 2 bottles wine that the rebels will not attack our present lines *in force* within one month from date—so as to bring on general engagement.

15. Wrote *World*, Ellis. Sent letter of recommendation to Policeman McWalter, 315 Bowery.

17. Undertook Railroad scheme through Pennsylvania Avenue with Pollak for *Dewey*, of New York.

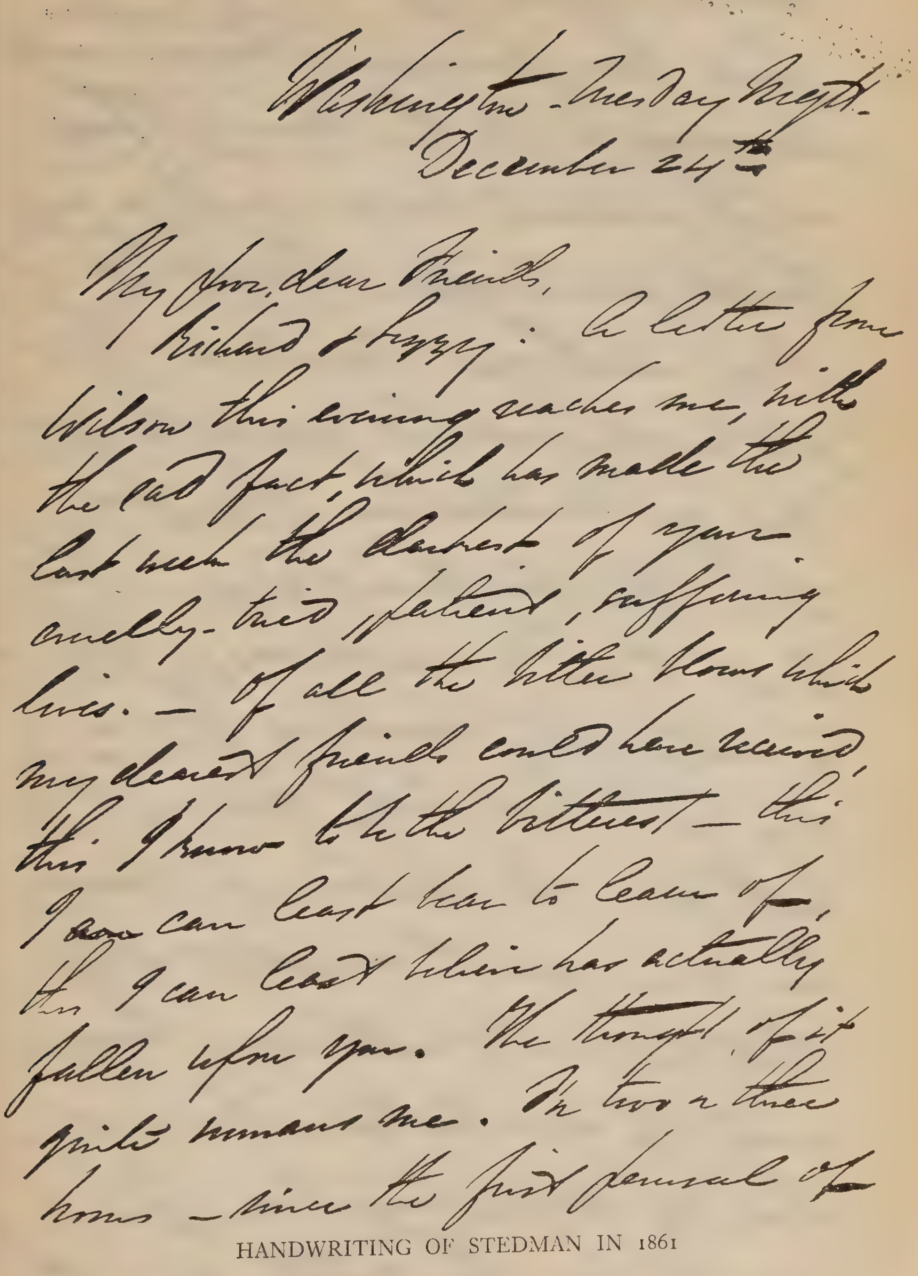
19. Am managing the Pennsylvania Railroad scheme.

On the 24th of December, Stedman wrote the following letter to Mr. and Mrs. Stoddard upon the death of their little son Willy:

> MY POOR, DEAR FRIENDS, RICHARD AND LIZZY: A letter from Wilson this evening reaches me, with the sad fact, which has made the last week the darkest of your cruelly-tried, patient, suffering lives.—Of all the bitter blows which my dearest friends could have received, this I know to be the bitterest—this I can least bear to learn of, this I can least believe has actually fallen upon you. The thought of it quite unmans me. For two or three hours—since the first perusal of Wilson's letter—I have been trying to say *something* to you, but only to feel how powerless and barren all language is at this time; to feel what a sacred barrier such a grief builds around you. Despite it, if I were with you, I could at least put my arms around you both, and give you human love. My poor Dick! My poor, dear Lizzy! This is all I can or would say. This is continually breaking from my lips. God help you—God be with you; He should, for Heaven has given you its cruellest trial. I do not write with any barren words of consolation, knowing that, if it were my loss, few would have the right, none the power, to measure and decrease my sacred grief. But I can let you know that another suffers for you, and that from this distance loving hearts are yearning toward you as you walk through the molten furnace. I know the brave hearts of my brother and sister; I know you fine as silk and strong as steel. A time will come when I shall see you even tenderer and stronger than before; if more sad, yet with holier memories, new and loftier lookings to the end. God bless you, my dear, suffering friends—may the great Power above all this darkness, above all this quenching of bright hopes and severing of life-strings, may that unknown Creator, giver and remover, have you in his tenderest keeping. Thus I pray to-night, loving you both dearly, and suffering for your loss as I should for the trouble of no others in the world.

With the close of the year 1861 Stedman ended his regular connection with the *World*. It was characteristic of him to write informing its editors the exact reason for his withdrawal and assuring them that "the *World* and every one of its editors and publishers are as dear to me as ever—I love the old struggling sheet and all my associates. But when I found that my family *could not* live on twenty dollars per week and that I could not get twenty-five dollars, I had to seek employment elsewhere. But not until with real regret I had given full notice that such must be the case. This is not said from any vain estimate of my own services. Indeed, they seem to me just now hardly worth salary and expenses."

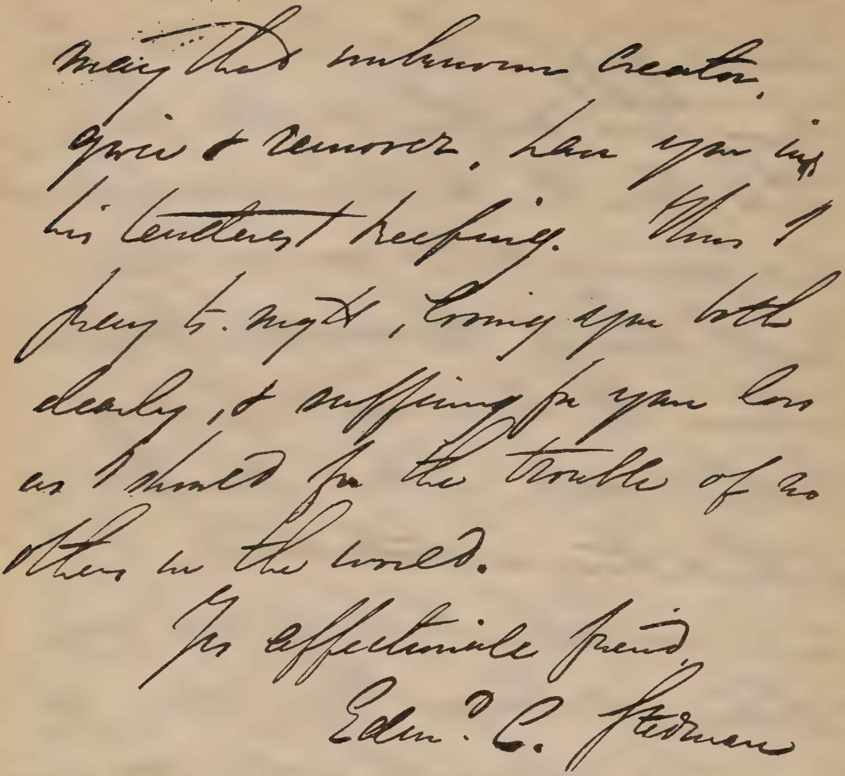
At the New Year, 1862, he took his oath and entered on duties in the office of the Attorney-General. The following day a despatch came from Manton Marble begging Stedman to continue his letters to the *World*, which he did in moments snatched after his duties with Judge Bates had been performed.



Washington—Tuesday Night—
December 24th

My dear, dear Friends,
Richard & Lizzy: A letter from
Wilson this evening reaches me, with
the sad fact, which has made the
last week the darkest of your
cruelly-tried, patient, suffering
lives.—Of all the bitter blows which
my dearest friends could have received,
this I know to be the bitterest—this
I now can least bear to learn of,
this I can least believe has actually
fallen upon you. The thought of it
quite unmans me. In two or three
hours—since the first perusal of

HANDWRITING OF STEDMAN IN 1861



mercy that unknown Creator,
giver & remover, have you in
his tenderest keeping. Thus I
pray to-night, loving you both
dearly, & suffering for your loss
as I should for the trouble of no
others in the world.

Yr affectionate friend,
Edm.d C. Stedman

CHAPTER XI

IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE AT WASHINGTON

1862–1863

Relieved from the strain of continuous and exacting newspaper work, Stedman was able to devote more attention to his absent friends, as his correspondence at this period shows. His personal letters increased in length as well as in frequency; for his conscientious fidelity to Friendship was extreme; it goaded him not to respond as bountifully as his heart dictated. In turn, such wide sympathies exhausted his time and strength, causing him to suffer over his inability to find any leisure when he was not too tired to write either prose or poetry; for to create Literature was the eternal demand of his nature. The continual influx of Northern acquaintances, as well as friends, to the capital, engrossed much of his attention, for so vivacious and magnetic a giver of friendship and wit was in constant demand. And he, who was delighted to please, he, who needed the stimulus and relaxation of social enjoyments could not, even if he might, seclude himself. In such a mood he writes to one friend: "With this year's changes and new health and scenes, several past years appeared to have been half-wasted in a too rigorous and proud interpretation of my tasks and duties; that I had perhaps set too much on being self-denying and devoted to the drudgery of life; that I had had too little faith in those good angels who feed us all somehow, and too little appreciation of the fact that love and recreation are just as much duties as toil and self-support. In short, that I hope hereafter, to think more of the present and my friends—to see if I cannot enjoy life somewhat for *itself* as well as for its ends; that this ought to make me a better fellow—at least, more decent to get along with."

To R. H. Stoddard.

WASHINGTON, February 1, 1862.

Of course you, and your wife, and all you two are enduring, have been daily in the minds of your friends here. I need not tell you that. A short letter from Lizzy reached me early in the month. Ever since it has been in my mind to write again. Sometimes letter-writing, common and vulgar as it has become, serves a good purpose. If there is nothing said on the pages, you at least handle a sheet of paper which is fresh from the touch of a friend, and absorb a certain magnetism, like the person who touched the hem of Christ's garment. And I'm sure that the very outside of a letter from a hateful person gives one a proportionally odious feeling. But I'm not going into an essay on letter-writing. Let me say that you need not entertain the idea of answering this. I know that you can have little heart to do anything of the sort. Besides, a letter that requires a remunerative answer, is a base, merchantable affair, a nuisance to receive. My pay comes in advance; certainly I take more comfort in writing you than you can in reading me.

After Lizzy wrote, I was sick, in bed, for seven days. Recovering, I found a heap of accumulated letters, etc.,—the business was first attended to, and now a welcome spare hour can be devoted to the pleasant sacred rites.

Came a note from Wilson to me, the other day, wherein he was so thoughtful as to inclose yours to him, and the verses by E. D. B. S. [Mrs. Stoddard]— I don't know whether the latter most affected my heart or head. When I studied their strange beauty, I found myself crying like a baby over their meaning and pathos; and when I thought with a heart-ache of their story, the sense of their melody haunted me like an echo. I have kept the original Ms. and returned a copy to Wilson. You are right in not going on a lonely pilgrimage to the Azores. Rather stay where you will at least have the soothing offices of habit. When agony is upon one, the routine of his physical nature rises to a positive blessing. Even if you eat, drink, smoke, sleep, write, mechanically, you still do these things; and if your trouble is such that the strong horns cannot conquer it, habit helps you conquer the strong horns.

Often of late, I have thought that if you could bring Lizzy and your books to this city for a few years, it might serve you better than a trip to the Hesperides, or even continuance in the places that have comforted you so long. The old circle has been pretty much broken up by the war; has it not? You would find *ares* of it here—quite a crystallization, in fact, of floating æstheticists, who have been driven, by fate or liking, to the tranquillity of these cloistered government offices—lazy, silent refuges, for all the war and tumult close at hand. Those who are exiled here, like each other better than they would at home; learn more of each others' good traits, and learn to like their bad ones. I should be quite happy, if you two were here, so that we could pursue our studies together. And if Ludlow could come, too, Washington would not meet with the fate of Sodom for want of three virtuous men and tobacco-smokers. Fitz-Hugh sends me his last story. He has talent enough for anything, and a *heart* as noble as native sunshine can make it. I suppose you hear sometimes from Lorimer Graham. Two of his female cousins, whom I met at a camp-parade, told me that he was still in Scotland, "amang the Graemes." Cozzens, you know is here, and all of us poor quill-drivers are ruining ourselves buying his high-priced rum and tobacco. Derby (J. C.) who has a sinecure office in the State Department (is Librarian) keeps house with Mr. Sparrowgrass. Chilton, Cozzens, old George Wood, etc., form quite a *Knickerbocker Cliqus Redivivus* (Hog Latin). This reminds me of Clarke's project, "Knickerbocker, Jr." Hearing of it, and that others, yourself included, were encouraging him, I sent him a little ballad [1]—having acquired such a genuine contempt for the performances of Gilmore and Co., as to throw up my cap for any rebellion, however desperate, against their *irrigatio Lelandiensis*. Folks say the Lelands used to keep the "Metropolitan," but now they keep the "Continental." Probably you heard that in New York before it came here.

Piatt's here, you know, and "the gifted author of 'Harrington,'" and Hay—who is young, and white-cravatish at the President's levees—and Willis, who is old and ditto, and Leutze, etc. The book-stores in Washington are *very good;* full of English editions of good books. The town itself is now full of handsome Northern women; Rowena and Hilda have ousted Isabella and Beatrice. Expenses of living are ten per cent more than in New York; and, between reduced salaries, and depreciated Treasury notes, my own and others' incomes are not the Pactolian streams we had anticipated.

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[1] "Montagu."

I suppose you would like to know what I'm doing personally. January 2d, I went into the Attorney-General's office. Judge Bates is the kindest gentleman in the world—one of the old school; has given me the only berth he had, a $1400. desk, (with no work attached to it, that I can discover) apologizing for it's not being worth more. In a few days, learning that the idea, that any Clerk in this office works, was a myth, I gravitated naturally to the Library, was placed in charge of the same, and given leave to catalogue. I will not hold a do-nothing pay-drawing berth. So I am in my element, and work conscientiously from nine to three, to the amazement of the loafers around me. Expect to get out a printed catalogue of 4000 volumes in a few weeks. Am writing also a few letters for the *World*, at $5. each—about all they're worth. Nothing here nowadays, but small-pox, and congressmen, and mud. It has rained now for thirty-two days, daily.

The thing that keeps me most busy, is attending to New Yorkers who come here, etc. Am essaying a little poetry, and hope yet to bear some fruit. As for you, poor boy, I know you will set your teeth together, and live bravely—even though the bell-rope has again slipt the King's hands, and this time glided almost out of sight. Your dear and gifted wife must be both child and consoler, and you must cling more closely than ever to her in her great suffering.

Daily, I am more and more enraged with England—the noblest literature, the meanest people. How we love the former—how we could fling our lives away hacking and hewing the latter. O, but our day of revenge will come! I only wish the whirligig of Time would spin faster.

To his Mother.

WASHINGTON, February 4, 1862.

Letter-writing is the straw that breaks my back. Letters to the *World*—letters to a brother in Aspinwall (who needs them, and to whom I make great efforts to write regularly)—letters to Mother and Sisters—letters to a dozen literary friends, to whom I *must* write, or sink out of sight—letters for office-seekers, for everybody and to everybody! I avow that I have been trying to write a magazine article for a fortnight—but have had to employ every spare moment, after office hours and attending to the *World* correspondence, in answering an accumulation of letters. *One* letter breaks up a day as badly as a dozen; a short one badly as a long one. I love to write you, and once at it! once having lost my evening—can write in detail. But I wish you would come home and not compel me to write at all. Reading your strictures on the chances of war with England, (and you very properly consider such a war inevitable, soon or late); and your fears lest you may be caught abroad with no money, and your distress about the poor girls, the query very naturally rises to Laura's lips and my own—"Why, then, don't they come home while there's time?" "My boy," said Henry Ward Beecher to an irreverent newsboy, who was swearing profusely, "My boy! I am frightened—*frightened!*" "Air ye?" was the answer—"why —— —— don't ye *run*, then?" . . .

Let me say that, although I have long ceased to ask your sympathy in the troubles which *you will insist* are my lot, I yet take the liveliest interest in your condition; and I often feel that you will learn that the life of those who so long, and voluntarily, expatriate themselves, grows more lonely and useless every year, and that some great evils may overtake you all, whom I love so much, when you are least able to bear them. Among evils, however, your son does not account the religious experiences which you narrate of yourself and Clementine. You judge, as usual, from an idealized view of my character, when you fear that I shall consider your honest and unaffected religious utterances "cant," or distasteful to read and meditate. Nothing ever delights me more than the simple faith of a loving heart. All religions, all lookings up to the Good God, who made us and cherishes us all, are good and lovable—be they Persian, Indian, Chinese, Catholic or Protestant Christian. As the whole thing is a matter of sentiment, faith, and our best instinct, the simpler the sentiment, the more childlike and confiding the faith, the more lovable and admirable the religion. Faith and good instinct are specially to be hoped for, and to me specially attractive, in women. They are eminently feminine attributes. Even from the æsthetic view, an irreligious, disputatious woman is out of taste, and a shock to the sensibilities. I like, also, to keep a child's faith pure:

> "Full soon shall come the inevitable load."

I have taken soothing pleasure in teaching my curly-headed boys to lisp their evening prayers. Freddy says, always, that perfect little English antithesis of petition:

"Now I lay me down to sleep, etc."

And King Arthur kneels by his side, with sweetly-folded hands, too young to speak the words, yet lisping a sound echo of every line. Let me repeat, dear Mother, that I am very glad if you can find a medicine to cure the wearied heart—if you can catch glimpses to make you less forlorn; and I shall look for great "fruits" from the new tree—and shall also expect Clem. to keep her lamp trimmed and burning. As for Mary's, I guess that there always was a halo in her neighborhood, waxing brighter and brighter until the perfect day. She has a very penetrative and self-poised mind. . . .

Now, while dismissing the question of religion, give me credit for having been very considerate. In view of the evident comfort which the new feeling is to you all, under the straits and loneliness which you are now enduring, I have forborne remarking on the coincidences between the poor and penitent portions of your life; have not even quoted the old refrain:

"When the Devil was sick," etc.

Concerning politics: It may be that as you say, I am laboring under a cloud. But in reading your statement that we are hanging traitors, people at home lift their eye-brows. Not a man has been hung by the North. The War has been hitherto conducted by us with gloves on, and that is the reason we have had no better fortune. Lincoln and Company are afraid of hurting somebody. Probably no war, since the world commenced, was ever waged on such scrupulously false humanitarianism, as this has been by us. You are quite right about the prospect of foreign intervention. In America, despite assuring official despatches, *everybody is quietly putting his affairs in order*, and expecting war with *England and France* within three months—at least, feeling that, unless McClellan makes faster headway, the probabilities favor such a consummation. And I can assure you—you may believe it, or not—that the North, calmly and patriotically understanding the causes of all this, of the Slave-power rebellion, and the sufferings involved in the extension of our troubles, has made up its mind to meet the worst, the loss of private fortunes, the drainage of its best blood, sooner than stultify its history and elect to become a portion of the European System. If the Lincoln Government falls one inch behind this popular sentiment, the Lincoln Government will die in a day, and we shall find leaders who will keep their oaths to defend the Constitution and the liberties of these United States.

I should not mention politics, were it not that you write me pages on the subject. But when you accuse me of such continual unrest, as not to be able to read your long letters, you are not just. Nothing is so soothing to a tired mind, as reading a Mother's loving words. "Rock me to sleep, Mother, rock me to sleep." All you say of my want of the repose of good breeding is true; but it is not kind to reproach me for the lack of an education which you neglected to superintend. In fact, dear Mother, every year convinces me more thoroughly of the fact that I must look to my own home, of which I am the founder and supporter, for content and happiness, and no longer indulge the vague dream of importing my life from Italy. And, on the whole, I have no doubt that my life is as quiet, self-contained, hopeful, and favored, as your own. If I am satisfied, why continually open old sores?

Your letters now disposed of, are you ready for some news? Looking over my little minute-book I make the following digest of its entries. . . .

Christmas, wrote my long poem—"Christmas in the Camps," a copy of which I sent you, and in which even your eyes cannot see Mr. Tennyson, though 'tis hastily written, and will be retouched before publishing in book-form.

Met Mrs. Waller and husband at a Cavalry Ball. Mrs. W. says: "How much you look like Mary!" Please write me of Mrs. W's *status* and antecedents. She is handsome—though a little artificial. Her husband was with Russell, the *Times* man, like a terrier after a bull-dog, all the period of his sojourn here. This reminds me to ask you if you ever see, or see regularly, any New York papers; if not, do you get your "reliable" American news from the *Times*, or *Galignani*, or what? Since Christmas, W. E. Dodge, Jr., Theodore Roosevelt and Morris Ketchum, appointed Commissioners to receive the soldier's pay for their families, have been campaigning from regiment to regiment, receiving *millions* of dollars, and doing great good. Stoddard has lost his only boy—a beautiful lad, eight years old. Stoddard is almost killed by the blow. These suffering children of genius have everyone's sympathy. It is strange that such losses should befall them in their toiling poverty. *Her* novel is in the press. I have written them, and wish you would write her. The boy's name was Willy. I enclose you a pathetic, half-unearthly little poem of her's—the only thing she has written since Willy's death. They say she goes moaning like Rachel.

Taylor and wife came here about New Year's; left some jelly in Laura's care for *Miss Dix*. When the latter received it, she wrote a note of thanks to Laura, supposing the latter to be her old friend, "Mrs. E. C. Stedman." You see I remember all these little things to write you when I do write. . . . And I am Librarian and Pardon-clerk in the Attorney-General's office. . . . If the army ever advances, shall try to get a furlough and go with it, for the *World*. . . . I hope to get time to do up the prose and poetry for which I have thus exiled myself for three years. You speak of my frequent changes. Do you not see that I never change, except on compulsion, and that everything except duty, is subordinated to my literary ends. Those ends have never been changed; have been kept steadily in view, through labor, sickness, and sorrow, and success, for eight years. I have never wavered; nor doubted but that, health given, I shall some time succeed, and have a wide sphere of making others happy. My friends, and mother, often doubt for me, and dispirit me as much as is in their power.

Here let me mention one thing. Is it true that I am so *selfish* as you continually accuse me of being? This question I have seriously considered for an evening. Looking back, *par example*, at the last nine months, I see that all my time has been passed in abnegation of my chosen pursuits. . . . God knows that for years I have made no effort for the common successes of life, except for those who are dear to me, and whom I may leave dependent, and for the sake of the thanks and gratitude of those who are toiling like myself.

. . . . Among the reasons which made me hate to leave New York, was regret at separating from one or two women. If anything has made my life cheerful, it has been the love of kindly and lovable women. So I shall not "cry out upon women," as Bardolph said Falstaff did, unless you frighten me with some more of Solomon's sayings. But for a year or two I shall make as few acquaintances, male or female, as possible.

If you see Howells, make something of him.

Here you have all the news—personal and otherwise. It only remains for me to once more declare myself your affectionate son.

Responding to a letter from Joseph M. Proskauer, in 1899, Mr. Stedman wrote:

I must send a few words to your East Side boys. They certainly can't do better than to think of Abraham Lincoln as in all respects the model of what a true American should be. Pray tell them that it was my fortune, in the long-ago days of Lincoln and the Civil War, to serve under a member of his Cabinet, and in that way I saw a good deal of the President. I had constant opportunities of observing, most of all, his great tenderness of heart; for I was the Pardon Clerk, whose office it was to examine all applications for pardon, and to decide on which should be laid before the President. My chief, Attorney-General Bates, soon discovered that my most important duty was to keep all but the most deserving cases from coming before the kind Mr. Lincoln at all; since there was nothing harder for him to do than to put aside a prisoner's application, and he could not resist it when it was urged by a pleading wife and a weeping child.

To his Mother.

WASHINGTON, February 20, 1862.

I propose to write you a brief note, devoted solely to public matters.

The United States Republic, having employed just ten months in equipping an army of six hundred thousand men, mounting and making a hundred batteries of artillery, building and mounting with heavy cannon a hundred forts—the United States Republic, having thus accomplished in ten months a work which France, Austria, and other Old-world nations have required as many years to execute, is at last prepared to overwhelm the gigantic rebellion of the South.

The U. S. Republic has patiently bided its time, careless of the sneers of Europeans who do not comprehend it, and forgiving the feeble patriotism and more feeble courage of Americans who have so long expatriated themselves as to merge all other anxieties into selfish regard for their personal incomes and conveniences.

At last, then, the army of the republic has commenced to move. Four great columns are pressing toward the Gulf of Mexico, from the Central and Western States, dividing the rebellion asunder, routing its forces, planting the old flag everywhere, turning the rear of the demoralized legions still confronting the Capitol.

Victory has succeeded victory.

On the 19th of January, General Thomas fought the Battle of Mill Spring, in Eastern Kentucky, defeating, with great slaughter, 10,000 rebels, killing their general, capturing their works, and opening the road to Eastern Tennessee—still loyal to the Union.

On the 6th of February, Commodore Foote sailed with his gunboats up the Tennessee River, took Ft. Henry, after desperate and daring fighting, with its General, officers and troops.

On the 7th, his gunboats made a daring voyage up the river, as far as the heart of Alabama, receiving everywhere the cheers of the loyal residents along the banks.

On the 10th, General Burnside's Atlantic expedition, after innumerable perils by sea and land, and with brave fighting, hand to hand, overwhelmed the rebels on Roanoke Island, captured 3,000 prisoners, menaced Norfolk, and is now cutting off railroad communication between Virginia and the South.

On the 12th, General Buell drove the rebel army from Bowling Green, Ky.

On the 15th, General Halleck whipped the rebel army of Missouri, and is now over in Arkansas, capturing the fast scattering forces of General Price.

On the 16th, Ft. Donelson, a stronghold four miles square, on the Cumberland River, surrendered its army of *Fifteen Thousand* rebels, with their Generals, etc., to General Grant, after three days terrific fighting, and the most gallant charges of our Illinois troops.

During the four days since ensuing, our armies have been pushing on, 200,000 strong, in the West.

Savannah is also probably taken by this time.

If the rebel army of the Potomac does not evacuate Manassas, it will be overwhelmed, and half-captured in two months.

Richmond and Norfolk must fall within the same time.

We have at Washington an army of 150,000 men, splendidly drilled and equipped, at last ready to move at a moment's notice, and sworn to conquer. We have learned what war is. A year ago Americans were ignorant of these matters.

The rebellion is dying—surely, and, at last, swiftly. We are not sorry that we have fought for the Union. It will be preserved.

On February 27, 1862, Stedman obtained leave of absence from Judge Bates to attend McClellan's fifth act. The 2nd of March, Marble made Stedman superintendent of the *World* affairs connected with the army, and he prepared "to go on with McClellan to see the end of the war."

From the diary:

March 10. Whole army in motion. Reserves pouring over river. I transact day's business at Attorney-General's office—At 5 P. M. take horse and equipment and start for the van. Plough through mud past artillery and cavalry reserve and reach Fairfax C. H. (18 miles) at 9 P. M. Found Painter, Ward, etc. Put up on floor with 1 Mass. Battery Captain and Lieutenant.

11. No sleep—too cold—fed horses—started for Centreville by the same road as in July last. Then to Battle Field Bull Run and Manassas. I was the first Northern man to revisit battle field. At night took quarters at Centreville. Wrote long letter to *World*.

12. Visited Battle Field of Blackburn's Ford. Wrote *World* again at night. Enemy have made a complete and splendid evacuation.

13. Great outcry against McClellan. Went back to Fairfax C. H. Saw General McClellan and General F. J. Porter. Learn that the army will be moved against Richmond via York and Rappahannock river, and so ride back to Washington.

Private despatch to Manton Marble.

WASHINGTON, March 13, 1862.

I wrote you a private note last night, which came to Washington this P. M. and went on to New York, and which I now write to partly contradict, finding myself unexpectedly returned here this evening. It is true that Sumner's Division is at or near Manassas Junction, but I believe Heintzelman's is not, and there is, at least, to-day a strong probability that there will be no pursuit of the rebels attempted over the Centreville route to Richmond. Coming down to Fairfax C. H. this morning (headquarters) to learn the exact truth about affairs, I found a council of war pending, went to General Fitz-John Porter's quarters till it was over, was then cordially welcomed, and he at once took me to a private room and talked with me an hour, saying he was sure he could rely on your and my discretion. The interview confirmed many things I had believed, shed light on others, and at all events brought me home.

Imprimis—I see by the papers and the Washington talk, that the evacuation has produced here the effect I feared—has given a great handle to McClellan's enemies and produced much political indignation. Now the hidden facts, which would set McClellan perfectly right with the public, must remain hidden, as otherwise his programme yet to be enacted (if not forbidden by the Cabinet) would be exposed and balked.

Next—The promoted division generals (to *corps d'armée*) with McDowell at their head, join the anti-McClellan party. There is great dissension and loud talk among the great generals—the worst ambitions and selfishnesses of some of them being stirred up, thanks to political interference with the Potomac campaign. And of course Porter and Franklin, two of our ablest generals, who should have had *corps d'armée* in the place of Sumner and Keyes, more than suspect that Cabinet ministers gave their rivals the hint to vote for an "advance on Centreville"—and feel very sore about it.

Next—McClellan finds himself involuntarily and unpleasantly opposed by the leaders of his *corps d'armée*—men who received their elevation, in fact, because they were opposed to him.

You remember that in my letter about McClellan's plans and position, written a few weeks ago, I published the gist of the "22d of February" order (No. 1) now officially made public. This proves my sources of information to have been correct. Now McClellan agreed with the rest to move on the 22d, but did not agree to move on Centreville. The reason he did not move, was not the weather and mud, but because the Government had not gathered the flotilla of boats at Annapolis contracted for (by Tucker) to be delivered at that date. Since McClellan's wish has been, from *the first*, (*so F. J. P. was allowed to tell me*) to send 75,000 men by transports to the region between the York, Rappahannock and James Rivers—and take Richmond. For see: Landed there, he is in river valleys—between rivers, not crossing them—and has rivers to supply him with transportation of food and forage. Magruder (or Huger) would have to evacuate Yorktown at once or be captured—Norfolk could no longer be held—Richmond would fall, before it could receive supports from Manassas—in attempting to fall back on Richmond the rebel army would be routed.

The Cabinet have continually thwarted and opposed this military plan. "Onward to Richmond" changed to "Onward to Centreville." The President said he thought *Washington would not be safe*, if *any* withdrawal of the army from the Potomac shores occurred, except one which should still keep it fronting the enemy at Manassas. General Sumner backed the President's opinion. General McClellan thought 25,000 men could hold it. Finally, the President reluctantly agreed to McClellan's programme, and the latter agreed to start on the 22d if the boats were ready. They were not ready, and he did not move. Then the murmurs commenced, and the talk of movement, and such a pressure that McClellan finally agreed to change his plan, throw Hooker across the Potomac, cross the Occoquan, and attack the rebel rear.—The moment he commenced preparations for this, the rebels knew it, and evacuated speedily and splendidly—taking forage, property and people with them, from far and near, blowing up bridges and even culverts to impede pursuit.

McClellan at once *massed* his army at Fairfax—took sufficient possession of Centreville (the rebels themselves having destroyed their means of getting back to it) and now smarting under the inevitable misconstruction of the thing, addresses his generals and the government somewhat in this style:

"You see, gentlemen, that we must go back to my original programme. If we build bridges and construct railroads at the *fastest possible rate*, it will take us 60 days to get to Richmond by this route. Why, we cannot move to Centreville, even, until the R. R. is repaired to bring supplies for 100,000 men! Now that the Potomac batteries are cleared, let us have the Annapolis boats directly at Alexandria—send for General Banks and his forces (Porter says Jackson has been in Tennessee for four days!) to hold Centreville and make a feint of pursuit, while 80,000 men land up the York River, etc., etc." *Well, the boats were telegraphed for, and 30 steamers to-night lie between Long Bridge and Alexandria*, besides hundreds of canal-boats, etc. But the clamor against McClellan increases, the President is still absurdly anxious about the safety of Washington—(I, coming in from Centreville, assure you that no rebel will *ever* recross Bull Run)—his rival generals are taking advantage of this to push their own interests, and so the army halts at Manassas, it being undecided which way to move, and bad feeling prevailing all around. The necessity for McClellan's programme *now* is at all events so apparent, that it will probably be carried out. The General to-day says it will be—and so I have come back to Washington. You must send a man here to go on the "three rivers" expedition. It will be a magnificent *periplus* without much fighting—perhaps will not move for a fortnight. I will equip your man, and he can put the mare aboard a transport and go it.

The soldiers in the camp idolize McClellan, and although chagrined at losing their fight, are enraged at the attacks made upon him. The rank and file have stopped buying the *Tribune*, so the army newsmen tell me. When McClellan passed through the camp this A. M. the soldiers gave him a complete ovation. He has the confidence of the *army*, and if not worried to death, will set himself right everywhere in the end.

The following is a copy of a note which Fitz-John Porter sent after me by a courier:

"Mr. Stedman—

The whole [contest] now till we get to Richmond is as to who shall stand out in the cold the longest without falling. It is a question of supply of food and covering. When the army gets to Richmond it may have a fight. The quicker it gets there the better for the country—The quickest plan is McClellan's to take the lower Chesapeake for a basis of operations with this army. Richmond in our possession and the rebellion is broken. That object and aim is McClellan's and if sustained he will accomplish it in the shortest time and least loss of life on our side.

F. J. P."

General Wood telegraphs to-day that he has heard of McClellan's restriction to the Potomac army, and hopes he will make Ft. Monroe his base of operations.

Now, though you have long ere this discovered that it is my fault (a real fault) to have undue affection and sympathy for the minority man and measures—and so you have seen me for McClellan and against him—I cannot tell to-night, being excessively tired, whether he is right or wrong, great or stupid. But at any rate, I regard this dispatch as the most important ever sent you, and wish it—*or a copy of it*—returned to me, if you will be so very kind, since I wish to preserve it among other inside history of these historic matters.—Will write about accounts, etc., next time—when I haven't ridden 30 miles.

On the 15th of March, 1862, Stedman returned to his desk in the Attorney-General's office, and sent this letter, through the courtesy of Mrs. McClellan, to General F. J. Porter.

Since our conversation of the 13th, at Fairfax Court House, I have been at Washington, and finding everything here, and the feeling pressing from the North, in quite as bad condition as I could have expected, I have devoted a day to a thorough estimation and investigation of the position. It seems to me that what I have thus seen and concluded is of sufficient importance to warrant me in intruding it upon one who, like myself, is General McClellan's public friend, and upon you, who, moreover, are intimately connected in friendship with his honorable interests.

To begin with. You know that I have no feeling or interest in the matter—one way or the other—except a very unpractical indignation at the historic mob injustice, which one day hurrahs for a leader and the next day hisses him; none except a personal dislike of the clique now stirring up the people, and hounding on the administration to an act of bad policy and gross injustice. You know that I was associate editor of the New York *World;* that I have been its chief Washington editor for the past year, and Army Correspondent; that our journal stands foremost in regard to army matters; that we are diametrically opposed to the *Tribune;* that last Fall I was myself alarmed at the great centralization of power in the hands of a new man—General McClellan; that, after carefully watching his course and character, that alarm gave place to indignation at the usurpation of power in other quarters, and at official ingratitude; that, finally, the *World*, and the *Times*, resolved to support McClellan to the furthest honorable extent; that we have done so—that I have done so—warmly and courageously against all of the *Tribune's* gross attacks; that now we still hope to see McClellan save us from disappointment, and are determined *he shall have the chance;* that, to conclude, I have not even his personal acquaintance, though just now fighting for his rights. Thus much I say, since, if this letter should fall into other hands, it will thus be understood that I am no secret agent, but say what I say from voluntary and open motives.

Now look the thing square in the face. The moment I heard of the evacuation of Manassas, etc., I foresaw the lever which outsiders would bring to bear against the General, and that he might never have a chance to work out the programme which this evacuation really benefits—insomuch as it leaves the river clear and Washington safe for the first time. Coming to Washington I find matters, so far as the *public and Congress* are concerned, even worse than I feared. The *Tribune*, and its ten million adherents are howling against the General. Last night, in this city, 2000 people cheered Fremont and McDowell's names, and hissed General McClellan's, at Wendell Phillips' lecture. I find that the majority of the Senate and House, that the entire radical clique, *now almost a power*, openly hint at the General's deposition from command of the Army of the Potomac. Look the thing square in the face. The Congressional Investigating Committee *may request such a step.*—Now you may have the warmest assurances from President and Cabinet, and they may mean what they say, but you cannot depend upon them more than from day to day, because in the end an American Administration *always* has to bow to the will of the ruling faction.

Now, believing in McClellan's talent and heart, and that of all things it would be most ruinous to the country to have any change at this crisis, and that no other man can be found to fill his place, I have worked yesterday and to-day, as I have said; have talked with a Cabinet minister, and with both friends and foes. And I am *assured* of the following facts:

1. That the opposing faction is at work this moment more earnestly than ever, and with more *apparent* reason, to supplant General McClellan and place a creature of their own in his place. This you know as well as I.

2. That within a few days they have succeeded in gaining over a large majority of both Houses and many of our former friends.

3. That the President, and enough of his advisers to constitute a majority, are determined to act fairly, and that even if the Investigating Committee should attempt to dictate, *which is not improbable*, it will do General McClellan more good than hurt, provided that he gives the President and his friends a fair public handle with which to work in his favor.

4. Therefore, I earnestly hope,—in behalf of General McClellan's friends—that you will say to him *Action*, *Action*, *Action;* that you will recommend his taking the greatest possible care to personally supervise and hurry the flotilla off in such wise that the powers that be will know it. Recollect that no matter how willing the President may be to have General McClellan's programme carried out to the end, he may be *forced* to retract all his pledges. I speak earnestly, and with some knowledge of the true position. If energy is displayed in every way, in four weeks from now the mob will toss up their hats for our side a little more crazily than ever. You cannot despise the people; they are a power. It is my business through life to use that power, and while I honor McClellan for his noble neglect to throw a sop to Cerberus, it is now the part of common sense to neither overlook nor be conquered by the brute's attacks.

You may read this to the General, if you choose. I want to see him *win;* my heart is set upon it, or I should not intrude even these words upon him—nor in any event, were it not for our interview last Wednesday. Confer with and command me when you think proper.

To Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Stoddard.

WASHINGTON, April 1, 1862.

DEAR FRIENDS—Which it doesn't mean that you're Quakers, but simply that, in the words of Captain Cuttle, I send you this letter "jintly." Your notes of the 20th reached me, and I write now in order to say a few words about McClellan, and to give you a key, such as few possess, to the history of the past two months and to what may happen before Summer. Should have written a week ago, but sickness and great labor prevented. Unless Marble tells you something of the private information he has received of late, my letter will be of interest, and it is because you voluntarily show an unusual shrewdness in estimating the *Tribune* attacks, and some confidence in McClellan, that I take pains to mention the matter.

Until within a week, at least, the idea prevailed throughout the North (the reticence of the press being now complete) that the Army of the Potomac, 200,000 strong, was chasing after the rebels, overland, beyond Manassas Junction, rebuilding bridges, etc., etc. Such is not the case, nor has it been. When, three weeks ago, it was announced that the "army was in motion," that it was moving *en masse* on Manassas, etc., McClellan was simply throwing his reserves over the river, and concentrating the old 120,000 (already scattered from Chain Bridge to Alexandria) at Fairfax Court House, in position to move *either* overland to the Rappahannock, etc., or to go by Railroad to Alexandria and there *embark* for other regions. Of course there was a great commotion among the forces, and a *seeming* forward movement. All the Congressmen, ignorant of these matters, and half the Army, *thought* the Army was moving on Manassas and going "to Richmond" overland. Then came news that the enemy had evacuated, and that there would be no battle at Centreville. The Congressmen, etc., deprived of their Olympian games, swore they had been sold, (which was true) and argued that McClellan had been sold (which was nonsense); and the radicals, mad because McClellan had not chosen to fight according to *their* plan, got up a popular outcry against him, and on the strength of it entered more heartily than ever into the *purely political* cabal this some time forming against him.

. . . .

Now I don't care a pin for any mere *man*—McClellan or anyone else—in such times as these. But can we never forget to be politicians, and at least try at patriotism. I want to see the South whipped. And knowing McClellan personally I know that he neither talks, knows, nor cares a d—n about politics. He is a soldier, every inch of him, and I think an unusually accomplished and broad-seeing General. When I contrast with his simple and frank nature, the narrow fiddling characters who constitute the bulk of our republican Congressmen, and who amuse themselves with reading scurrilous pamphlets and getting up rumors of defeat—my sympathies are with him, not with them. God save this country! You know I am a republican—out-and-out—but I have never known such small men in such high places, as the mass of the republican members in Congress. You should see them face to face to appreciate them. There is hardly one of them who is not a mere *party* man—who dares have an opinion contrary to the dictum of the party whippers-in.

There, my dear Dick and Lizzy, knowing your brave hearts and lonely hours, you see I have written all this to interest you, and must give me credit for it, since I have to write so much on these matters for pay that such writing is distasteful to me.

Seeing McClellan often, and having a relative visiting at his house—Miss Stedman, of Hartford, his wife's schoolmate—I know the whole story. He has offered me a place with the staff, if I'll go to Richmond; and indeed, after witnessing the campaign thus far, one would wish to be "in at the death," but my desk is so important during the Spring season that I hardly dare to accept the leave of absence which Judge Bates has kindly tendered. Taylor is mistaken about work here. I have plenty to do, besides the *World* business. . . .

And now for a sheet of private, not public talk. Taylor, you know, has got his Secretaryship, and is now busy making political friends to secure his ultimate possession of the Ministership (when Cameron returns). This latter is private—until he tells you himself. He is really showing a talent for self-pushing, and if he works half as hard for the Government will make an addition to the diplomatic corps. However, it is, like all of Bayard's successes, an honorable preferment, worthily bestowed. *Sic semper bonis.* House steps out.—Boker, you see, is writing poetry. Always good at ballads, and his "Cumberland" is really a spirited thing. . . .

I am glad that Lizzy's book is coming out at last, and request an early copy—as I shall have something to say about it, somewhere. Perhaps the Spring is as good a time as any for its birth—people who travel, and those who lie under the Summer-trees, will read it. I don't care whether Carleton is paid for his venture—he treats me shamefully and will not render any account—but I am almost as interested and hopeful in its success as its author can be.

You don't know how much I yearn for New York—to see you, and the Ludlows, and the dear old Bay, and leave this multitudinous loneliness of Washington behind me forever.—We are uncertain how we shall manage the Summer. Can get no house to keep house in. Probably the hen and chickens will go North, while the cock stays here. If you and the rest would only get places here, as I have done, and help found a colony of white folk among these savages! My love to Aldrich, despite his impudences.—I hope dear Richard and Lizzy, that as the buds bloom and the birds sing, your hearts will have new hopes—your hands new efforts—with the fairer season close at hand. Wilson never writes me now—why not? Things conspire to keep us poor also.

The middle of April, Stedman obtained a pass from the War Department to join General McClellan at Yorktown. "Need money badly," he writes, "and also desire to see crisis of war in which I have been so long interested. Yet something restrains me from leaving Laura and the children and going to the battle-field." Ten days later, he decided to send his family North, and to rejoin General McClellan's column.

To his Brother.

WASHINGTON, May 14, 1862

On Sunday, the 11th, I returned from the Peninsula, and found your letter of the 25th April lying on my desk. Your improvement in health is good news, but we are all more anxious than ever that you should get away from a region, which seems to be surely and insiduously undermining your constitution. . . .

A month ago, they told me at the *World* office that they were again regularly sending you the paper. If so, you have seen by my letters something of my exciting experiences with General McClellan's column. I have never before had so much hard campaigning and adventure crammed into a fortnight. Our correspondents were managing affairs there badly, and Marble begged me to get leave of absence and straighten matters out. So Judge Bates gave me two weeks leave from May 1st. I started on the 28th April, rode my horse to Baltimore, took boat for Fort Monroe, and rode to Yorktown, which I reached May 1st. Was at the siege and evacuation, joined the pursuit, was in Sunday's skirmish, next day saw the battle of Williamsburgh, from beginning to end, then went ten miles farther; all the time had frequent pleasant and confidential intercourse with McClellan. He is developing, you see, those great qualities which I always have claimed for him—although our battles on the Peninsula have not been decisive, and the rebels have handsomely covered their retreat. All the time I lived on hard bread and coffee—slept in the rain and mud—got fat, and felt gloriously. The spirit of the soldiers is splendid, and death and suffering are so constantly on every side that no one cares anything about them. Such experiences make me understand the exciting periods of history with a clearer view than before. After the battle of Williamsburgh, it seemed probable that the rebels were getting South, across the James River, and that we should enter Richmond without a great fight. So I came home, stopping at Fort Monroe to accompany the Norfolk expedition. Now, it again seems as if the Southern retreat of the rebels is cut off, and there may be a decisive engagement at Bottom's Bridge. So I half wish I had stayed. And yet, when I think of my narrow escapes, my adventure in the forest with guerrillas, my wife and children, I realize that neither the small sum received for my letters, nor the experience, are sufficient justification for my running such risks, and have about made up my mind that my year of soldiering is fairly at an end. Having played Shakespeare's rôles of infant, schoolboy, lover, soldier,—it is now time to assume the Judge's gravity and get the "fair round belly, with good capon lined." I am grey enough, the Lord knows.

One word more about the war. Unless McDowell pushes down more rapidly (Gen. Pres. Emperor Stanton is responsible for his tardiness) the enemy may have both a superior force and position to McClellan's, and gain a victory. But I trust not. Again: a great battle is brewing out West, at Corinth—in which it seems probable that the attacking party will win, as each side is establishing a splendid defensive position.—I see that England and France are again getting their backs up. We capture New Orleans, etc., but take no cotton—and England considers that she has an inalienable right to *force us to spend our money* for her gimcrack manufactures, and to keep her supplied with raw material. . . .

Well: Laura and the children went home—to Redbank—two days after my departure for Yorktown, and I now come back to a lonely room—in fact, am at a hotel for a day or two, while searching for rooms in which to spend the Summer. My friend, J. J. Piatt, the Western poet (now in the Treasury) and myself, think of rooming together this Summer, and are trying to find apartments. His wife is in Kentucky, having her first child. Am expecting my books and pictures, etc., from New York every day, and hope to write some this season. This continual moving—march and countermarch—is what keeps us poor.

. . . .

Grandmother Dodge, I see by the papers, is *dead*. Her decease is sudden, though in the course of Nature not to have been unlooked for. Verily a mother in Israel has been gathered to her rest, and you and I, Charley, have lost one of our most unselfish and faithful friends. She was always *maternal* in her love and remembrance of the two half-orphans. . . .

In the Summer, unless I am campaigning by night and day, horseback exercise does not agree with me in this arid climate—so I shall by no means draw on the savings which you so kindly place at my disposal.

You perceive that the inflation in stocks is fairly under way. Either securities are selling far above their actual worth, or, *what I think nearer the truth*, our paper money is so easily made and forced upon the market, as to be worth much less than was our former currency. If foreign exchange does not rule very high I shall be agreeably disappointed. . . .

In the *World*, May 9, 1862, Stedman gives a more detailed account of his adventure with straggling rebels, to which he alludes in the preceding letter:

An immense forest, eight miles in breadth, reaches from Yorktown to Williamsburgh—twelve miles. Within its area are all sorts of fastnesses, thickets, swamps, jungles, deer, wild turkeys, everglades, and everything else constituting the makeup of an unsettled American tract.

Two main roads lead from the lower to the upper portion of these woods, skirting respectively, their York and James River sides. Over the one first named the main body of our army marched to Williamsburgh. No skirmishers were thrown through the woods; our pursuit was rapid, and led only by cavalry on the turnpike. As a consequence, numbers of rebels stationed or encamped in the wooded space between the two roads must have found their retreat cut off by our advance; must now be far within our lines, lurking, like the Seminoles or runaway slaves, in the heart of the jungle, living on hogs (which run wild there) and awaiting an opportunity to make good their escape into Dixie.

Not thinking much about this, I yesterday nearly lost my life, and certainly was very much more frightened than under any peril into which this War has hitherto brought me. Leaving Williamsburgh for Yorktown, I passed over Hooker's battle-field, (near the James River) and so came out on the James River road. Wishing to cross over to the familiar and guarded York River road, and being misdirected by a soldier, I struck into the forest by a track two miles lower than the frequented route which I ought to have followed. Proceeding northeastward for an interminable distance, I came at last to a deserted saw mill in the heart of the forest. A half mile further and no opening; the woods were dismal and lonesome, and suddenly the naturalness and likelihood of there being rebel hiders in this *terra incognita* flashed across my mind. Besides my own luggage, I was carrying the mail of the Massachusetts First Regiment, which I had promised Colonel Wells should reach Yorktown safely. It is no wonder that I felt a little nervous, and was rejoiced when I reached what seemed to be the border of the woods, but which proved a "clearing," and in which I saw the dirty tents of a deserted rebel camp. My horse paused for a moment at the edge of this spot, and I was looking, more in curiosity than suspicion, at the surroundings, when—*bang!* right in my path, and the ragged, spiteful whirr of a bullet across my shoulder! Before I really comprehended what had happened, three or four more had chased by me, the good horse had reared, wheeled about, and was tearing like mad down the road. I did not dare to keep the track, but dashed into the thicket, and galloped amain toward the setting sun. How I kept my seat I don't quite understand. When it was safe to pause every tree seemed a rebel cover! The idea of being murdered in that lonely forest! I well know that these desperate barbarians kill us wherever they find us—at a cowardly disadvantage. For a moment I thought of taking the mail bag, abandoning horse and luggage, and getting out on foot. Then it seemed more reasonable to spur my horse at a gallop for the James River road until I reached it. This was done, dashing through thick and thin, and when I again saw open fields, and breathed fresh air, I had such a wholesome terror of that forest as to take a circuit of leagues rather than enter it again. The consequence was that night overtook me still *en route* for Yorktown, and I had to bivouac by the roadside. This morning, arriving at Yorktown, and reporting the affair to General Van Alen, military governor, the General considered my theory of the attack correct, took the bearings of the location and will to-morrow have it raked by a file of skirmishers. There are probably hundreds of skulking traitors in the bush.

Back in Washington, at 275 F. Street, Stedman became messmate with J. J. Piatt. "Referring to our days in Washington," wrote Piatt to Stedman, in 1904, "I spoke of you in connection with my piece entitled 'Bird Nests at Washington.' I wonder if you remember the occasion of its suggestion. . . . One afternoon you told me Attorney-General Bates had suggested as something for you to put in verse an incident which had been noticed at the White House. Some wrens had built their nests, and hatched their brood, in the empty bomb-shells on the top of posts in front of the portico."

The early Summer days passed in duties at the office of the Attorney-General, with frequent evenings shared with friends at the theater, at their homes, or with work on his poems "Alectryôn" and "The Sulphur Gatherers," the latter, a long poem that he had commenced in the Summer of 1859, and which he never published in entirety. A note on the manuscript of this poem reads: "How I toiled over this. It was good practise work, but Tennysonian, and no 'Woman' in it. First written at the Phalanx, 1859, revised at Washington, 1862, recopied, 1867. This poem narrating an event in the Mexican Conquest has not hitherto been published, because the author's maturer judgment deemed it too conventional and lacking in the dramatic action which should sustain so long a story. It was nevertheless composed with care and pleasure."

The close of August brought that black hour of the Rebellion with its second Bull Run, and the defeat of General Pope. On September 1, 1862, at the Battle of Chantilly, Virginia, General Philip Kearny, in the night, and in heavy rain, became separated from his troops, when suddenly, encountering some Confederate skirmishers, was shot dead. Some years later, while the echoes of the War were still reverberating, Stedman read a newspaper account of the ringing retort made by the valiant General Kearny to his Colonel, just before he met his death. This incited Stedman to pen his "Kearny at Seven Pines," wherein he pictures,

How he strode his brown steed! How we saw his blade brighten
  In the one hand still left,—and the reins in his teeth!
He laughed like a boy when the holidays heighten,
  But a soldier's glance shot from his visor beneath.
Up came the reserves to the mellay infernal,
  Asking where to go in,—through the clearing or pine?
"O, anywhere! Forward! 'Tis all the same, Colonel:
  You'll find lovely fighting along the whole line!"

In 1885, in a letter to Thomas D. McAlpine, Superintendent of the National Military Cemetery at Mound City, Illinois, Stedman says, "It gave me a genuine thrill of pleasure to learn that my lines on Phil. Kearny, written in the glow of youth—years ago—still find a home in the hearts of the gallant survivors of the War. I did not know they were posted at Seven Pines, and I thank you for telling me of it; and thank you again for showing your liking for them, and honoring them with a place on the wall of the Station under your own charge."

On September 6, 1862, Stedman wrote "Wanted—A *Man*": it was printed in the *Tribune* on the 9th, when Judge Bates handed the poem to President Lincoln, who read it to his Cabinet. Throughout the country, evoking criticism from proslavery papers, its stanzas, voicing the urgent need of the North for a great leader, were repeated:—

Back from the trebly crimsoned field
  Terrible words are thunder-tost;
Full of the wrath that will not yield,
  Full of revenge for battles lost!
  Hark to their echo, as it crost
The Capital, making faces wan:
  End this murderous holocaust;
Abraham Lincoln, give us a MAN!

Give us a man of God's own mould,
  Born to marshal his fellow-men;
One whose fame is not bought and sold
  At the stroke of a politician's pen;

Give us the man of thousands ten,
Fit to do as well as to plan;
Give us a rallying-cry, and then,
Abraham Lincoln, give us a MAN!

. . . .

Is there never one in all the land,
One on whose might the Cause may lean?
Are all the common ones so grand,
And all the titled ones so mean?
What if your failure may have been
In trying to make good bread from bran,
From worthless metal a weapon keen?—
Abraham Lincoln, find us a MAN!

To T. B. Aldrich.

WASHINGTON, September 15, 1862.

MY DEAR TOM: It is a good name, worthily borne by such men as Browne, and Urquhardt and Aquinas, and à Kempis, and yourself, and i' faith I'll e'en call you by it. Since I began to write letters for lucre, I have forsworn all such insults as letters to friends—but once in a while the ineffable longing for a talk with some dear old chum seizes one in this gehenna of a town, and I imagine he'll be glad to hear from me.

As I was invading Philps's for your book[1] (more hungry for some mental pabulum of the North, than were the rebels for the flesh-pots of Frederick,) the aforesaid bibliopole handed me a copy with your kindly greeting inside. So I was pleased, went home and finished it that night; thereafter loaning it to the O'Connor *et al.* If you have ever thought, my dear boy, that I could not, or would not, appreciate and give you credit for your own peculiar and subtle genius, let that misconception be herewith ostracized forever. Since I take honest satisfaction in saying that some portions of the book charmed me beyond measure. Never was anything more delicately rendered than the scene between the crazy chap and the girl who couldn't help loving him,—and when the bubble broke into the lily I broke into good hearty praises. But what specially satisfied my high-art notions—for which I've been belabored so much—was the pure and simple *English* of some portions of the book. As every rose has its thorn, the volume had some things I didn't like, such as a reflection of the *Wandering Jew* in one of the New Orleans chapters.

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[1] "Out of His Head."

I might have said as much as the above in some public journal if 1st—I had had any "organ," and 2d—If your promised blue-and-gold editions of Poems did not suggest a future opportunity of serving you up "whole." After all, a man is in danger when writing about his friends. See: I wrote an elaborate notice of "The Morgesons"—trying to penetrate its best meaning and to put its author's genius fairly before the Phila-my-delphians; yet I'm afraid E. D. B. S didn't half like what I said. Do you see Richard and Elizabeth as much as of old? In all their struggles, successes, and sufferings, they always loved you like a brother. For one I can never forget their kindness at a time when the Valley of Humiliation was thoroughly exploited—trigonometrically surveyed, I may say—by your obedient servant.

But here. How are you getting on this Summer? *Air* you, or air you not, a *pardner* in the House of Carleton? Under circumstances, I would be a publisher. A publisher in every man's family may be, like a gunboat, a good thing. But to publish such a book as "The Flying Dutch-man!" It is particularly heinous in George W., who has such genuine good taste. (Those green paper covers, for instance are the handsomest things of the season.) It's a "sin against light," as the Calvinists say. He *knows* he's doing wrong. Are you, or are you not, a party to such proceedings? Laura, and another lady, both write me that you are looking thin and worn. What's the matter? Don't imitate me, who am becoming the successor of Calvin Edson! This Summer of inaction in a pestilential climate has worn me down. Sickness following sickness, I have just crawled daily from my rooms to the office, and back again. But you should see my rooms! Have had jolly bachelor quarters, with all my old traps,—books, pictures, pipes, etc. Often wished you were here. Have kept an extra bed for you. But now am to shut up the lovely bachelor-shop, and go North for my hen and chickens. Have been hungry for them this some time.—As for the War, I don't write you a word of it, being disgusted.[1] Have had one delightful acquaintance here, Mrs.

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[1] Yes, I will. McClellan just telegraphs his victory at Middletown. Good boy!

O'Connor. Her husband, too, is a big man. He has a story, "The Brazen Android"—coming out in three numbers of the *Atlantic*, which I've seen, and which beats *any* magazine tale I ever read. (You remember his "Ghost," etc., in *Putnam*.)—He was taken with your book, and his opinion's worth more than mine.

Do you ever see the Ludlows? And how do you pass your life generally—as much of a celibate as ever, I suppose. It's refreshing, in these days of conversion from Heathendom to Christianity, to see a fellow, like you, gradually lapsing into a heathenish state. There's more joy in Heaven over one Christian that repenteth, and becometh a Heathen, than over fifty righteous men.

. . . By the way, do you want a Captaincy, Cloistership, Collectorship, or Patent of Nobility? Pray forgive me for writing so much—and so much nonsense. Believe that I remember you tenderly in my devotions, and am still, as of old. . . . .

To his Brother.

Washington, September 16, 1862.

Because the War assumed an aspect so infinitely disgusting, I had no heart to write you news that you would be sorry to hear. The steamer which takes this letter will also carry you tidings of the defeat of the rebel invading army. The terribly bitter tide seems at last to be turning. How complete yesterday's success was we do not yet know—having no details of the fight, further than that we are driving the lousy hordes out of Maryland in confusion and defeat. I trust that "we are a people yet," and that the current once turned must now flow more strongly in our favor every day. The North has been made in earnest by these late insults, and I believe that even the abolitionists are glad to hear of McClellan's victory. *I* am an abolitionist, so far as hatred of slavery is concerned, but I have no sympathy with the selfish party tactics faction who lead the abolition multitudes. The *honor* of the Northern race is with me worth more than all the rest.

The Connecticut troops, including Ed. Harland's and Grif.'s regiments, were in the heat of yesterday's battle and I shall be anxious to learn details.

Laura wrote me an account of your mournful departure. You must about these days be homesick enough. (I am sure that I am.) One thing is a consolation: that you return under such creditable and lucrative auspices, that you may reasonably hope in a few years to lead an independent life in a civilized land. After all, you are rather lucky to be away from the States, and doing better than ever, during this War—of which the inconveniences are just beginning to tell on the North.

My life has presented no features of interest since you left. Lest the capital *might* be taken, (the imbecility of Government and quarrels of our Generals seemed to make it not only possible, but probable,) I sent all my Mss. North in a trunk, making up my mind to lose my books, etc. But Washington is now safe—I trust forever. The attempt to get up an insurrection in Maryland *most signally failed*, lifting a great load forever from the local heart. I really believe that Maryland is Union in sentiment.

Pollak has returned from France, looking improved. After three months labor I have at last found a place where my family can board—at the Washington Hotel, corner of Third Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. It will cost me nigh $100. a month (washing included) or $10. more than last winter, but it is the best that anyone can do here, and I am luckier than most. I cannot bear living away from my family *any longer*, and am going for them next week. The expenses of moving, travelling, etc., to say nothing of my own winter garments (of which I have bought none for two years)—will amount to $75. more than I can raise. But I have confidence it will come somehow. The *World* is growing meaner and meaner, and is now coming out Democratic. If it does, I think I shall leave the old sheet, and try to get an engagement where the pay is better—though I don't see exactly where.

The theatres here are in full blast. The Florences are at the one next Willard's, and Maggie Mitchell at the one in 10th Street. Evans (the "Baron") has gone North. My latest literary achievement was finishing a column advertisement for Brady, to pay for Laura's picture, which I understand, is at last taken.

Noon. The latest rumors are not so favorable. It is whispered that General Miles's force at Harper's Ferry has been captured by the rebels in their retreat. There is also an alarming statement afloat (which, however, I don't credit) to the effect that the rebels have a large force at Leesburg, which they intend to throw across the Potomac, in the rear of our army, and against Washington. Probably you will have all these points cleared up in the newspapers by the time the Steamer sails.

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, October 8, 1862.

As I write the above date I recollect for the first time that I am 29 years old to-day. Frightful isn't it? And so little done! How true it is that after the youth has cut down magnificent forests for his future palaces, the man goes quietly to work and builds—if he's lucky, a homestead—if unlucky, the commonest kind of a hovel.

As for me, I haven't even got the hovel. But I've made some friends, have written some poetry and prose, and have got two boys well under way "whom I piously believe to be mine own," and who, if they live, will perhaps do better than their father.

Laura and I received your letters notifying us of your safe arrival, and yesterday your's of the 25th ult. came to hand, by which I see you are considerably exercised about our miserably-managed War. Well, long ere this reaches you, you will have heard of McClellan's really magnificent two week's campaign, ending with the victories (for they *were* victories) of South Mountain and Antietam; also of the disgraceful and ruinous surrender of Harper's Ferry—which prevented McClellan's success from being complete. But, on the whole, things now look well in the East. The tables are also turned very handsomely in Kentucky, etc. Nothing but gross imbecility should now prevent our side from pouring the new levies straight down to the Gulf. Unhappily, that imbecility governs the administration, but my hope is that our six months' sad experience may not have been wholly thrown away. *Nous verrons.*

I was very sorry not to have been able to see you again before you left, but hope you will avail yourself of your privilege, and come North each Summer hereafter—if only to stay a fortnight. Your importation of a horse is a most excellent idea, but couldn't you have bought him to better advantage in New York? Perhaps, however, horses need acclimation no less than men.—Remember, that the time to ride is in the cool of the evening twilight—though a *short* trot in the morning isn't a bad thing, a cup of chocolate and a cracker *first being placed* in the stomach of the rider.—By Laura's note inclosed you will see that all hands are in Washington, nicely settled—but a precious time we had getting here, and a costly one. I went North, passed a week at Redbank, and with

Ellis, and had a fine time which did me good, though this accursed Washington weather pulls me down again. Finally returned with Laura, the children, six trunks, the crib, sewing-machine, and large rocking-horse—the latter of which will be excellent for the children to exercise with this winter. Well, I borrowed $100. of Bangs, which he generously offered to loan me—payable in four monthly instalments, $25. each. With this I bought a suit of winter clothing, plain, and a nice black coat, and some fixings for Laura and the children. . . .

I have finally dissolved my connection with the World. The paper turned a complete summersault under Marble's guidance, and came out rum-loving, God-hating, and secesh-sympathizing Locofoco. They say that August Belmont and Ben. Wood are backing Marble up. One thing is certain, the paper has made a great pecuniary "hit," though at the sacrifice of honor. The circulation has doubled—they print nearly 50,000, or as many as the *Tribune*, every Locofoco, or Old Line Whig, taking it eagerly. Moreover all the Corporation, Supervisors, and Sheriff's advertising, has been taken from the other papers and given to the *World*. The old sheet is rolling in prosperity. Is it not a shame that those who have weathered it through its dark days, should now be obliged to leave it, at the moment when it can pay them handsomely, or forfeit all decency and self-respect. You know, Charley, that no one of our blood was ever, or ever will be, a Locofoco—certainly not disloyal. The *World* really opposes Government so bitterly as to lend aid and comfort to the enemy. I cannot take money from Government and that sheet at the same time. All the decent men on the paper feel as I do. Spaulding will leave at once. *Indeed, I made an engagement for* him with Raymond, and he is to take a leading chair on the *Times*. When Congress opens, and not till then, I shall try to make an engagement with either the *Times* or *Tribune*. My relations are very friendly with both. Bangs also feels ashamed of the *World's* course, though, as he is publisher, he will not leave. . . .

The course of Government has been so stupid, that I am afraid the canvass in New York will be a close one—a very close one. Hereafter, the two parties turn on the question of support to the Government or sympathy with the rebels.—I have no time to discuss Lincoln's proclamation.—Shall make a little money this month, writing law arguments for Pollak. Have written one (he furnishing the points) this week for the New York Circuit Court. . . .

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, October 18, 1862.

In spite of a long established feeling that God works by great laws, set in operation millenia ago, which he does not disturb for one man's, or one nation's, harm or benefit, certain events in my life almost make me believe in "Special Providences." I suppose it's so with every man. Almost everyone, as he grows older, and consequently more mature in reason, relies on his reason less—on his instinct and *experience* more. Judge Bates was talking with me about this very thing not long ago. He is a firm believer in special providences—shrewd and cool old head, nevertheless!—and says that whenever, in the struggles of his youth, he was pressed by his creditors, a debtor or a fee came in at just the trying time, for just the right amount.—Probably this seems rather didactic writing to send so far, and you may think I am relapsing into schoolboy days. But, really, I was as much startled by the amount and date connected with your generous birth-day gift of $100., which reached me a few days since, as gratified by your always thoughtful affection.

I accept your present with as much pleasure as you feel in sending it, and that I know is a good deal. Frankly, it was needed and came at precisely the right moment. Dear me! will the time ever come when my "ship will come in" again; when I can do my share of this kind of thing. You have had it all your own way for some years past. But, in the midst of all the money-making I see about me, and believing that something must yet be tendered by the Fates in return for my patient waiting and labor, I have yet a secret hope that my time will come. Every dog does have his day, and mine has certainly not been in the past. . . . But no angel shall have the credit of your goodness. It was just like you, youngster, and you well maintain the family traditions. It has made me snug and sure for the Winter—lifting us just over the boundary line (*see Micawber*) between misery and happiness. . . .

I wrote you on the 8th. Since then we have been quietly settling down in our new quarters. The rooms are very comfortable, and quite charming with the aid of our fixtures. If you could be with us in Washington now, as the weather is clear and cold, and we are all together again, you would find it more pleasant than last summer. The children are benefited by the change—all people are temporarily benefited by *any* change. We are so comfortable as to sincerely hope that, when Congress sits and the hotel becomes crowded, there will be no attempt at raising prices beyond our $90. contract, but that we can peaceably occupy these rooms for eight months of the year. The Pollaks have come into town and taken a furnished house, corner of 8th and K., vacated by a friend of theirs. We took tea with them Friday night, and anticipate much pleasure from their friendship this winter. Mrs. Pollak always speaks enthusiastically of you. M. le Baron d'Evans is here for the season—making much money in the photograph line, and very generous and social. He is really a good fellow, and one likes even his foibles. Your pretty friend, Kate Stevens, is suddenly married to the surgeon who was with her when you met her first. He is hardly good enough for her. From New York I hear no family news since my last. Spaulding is fairly ensconced on the *Times*, and is writing vigorous "leaders." He has sent me a long letter, thanking me for my negotiations in his behalf, and assuring me of his lasting friendship and influence. I mean speedily to find some letter-subjects on which to base an "occasional correspondence" with the *Times*, and, eventually, a valuable connection.

My health does not improve any too rapidly. Last summer made me old very fast. So much for the "latest personal intelligence." The general news naturally resolves itself into three sections—on which I can give you those inside views which I write to newspapers, etc., with sage pomposity—and which so frequently turn out of little value to anyone but the owner. They may interest you in your exile:

. . . .

Politics. Bad, bad, bad! Resulting partly from the unpatriotic character of politicians. Once a partizan—always a partizan. A Loco would "vote the ticket" if Gabriel's trump were sounding. But the Government defeats are largely its own fault. Its own imbecility and cowardice have given the opposition traitors a handle and a head to their axe. Its fickle and indecisive war management has given the demagogues a rallying-cry; its cowardice in not enforcing the "draft" has resulted in all the new levies being composed of earnest, patriotic Republicans, who have gone to the War as volunteers, while the Locos have stayed at home to elect Democratic tickets. We are badly whipped in Ohio and Indiana, and have terribly lost ground in Pennsylvania. It looks as if, in any event, the Republican party, *as a party*, would be "deader than a door-nail" before this Administration goes out. The War, too, is beginning to be unpopular. Our people shrink from the first experience of its effects—now *at last* being felt in the rise of prices for all sorts of goods, the taxes, etc., etc. If we had been taught to suffer from the commencement, we should have been more heroic.—The New York election, which comes off in a fortnight, will be unfavorably influenced by the result in other states, but I think is safe. Of course the *World* is in high feather; has made a great hit; is the central organ of the Locos; *virtually* helping Jeff. Davis all it can. Marble was truly worldly-wise. But I do not regret my departure. Despite the mismanagement of the Government, and all our agonizing disappointments, all should stick to their colors. I am as earnest as ever in the cause of freedom and progress. Anyone can be jolly under *good* luck. Now is the time to try true men's souls.

Money Matters. You note, I suppose, the rapid rise in gold and exchange. I think it worth while to write you a little on this and kindred points. Those interested in bulling gold claim that the War *must* last another year; that Mr. Chase *must* issue $300,000,000. more currency; that an inflation must ensue, etc. But the Chase party claim, and with great justice, that the Wall Street men are creating an artificial rise; they buy gold, borrow money on it from the banks, buy more gold, borrow money at the increased value, etc., withdrawing the gold from the market, and cruelly running up its price and that of exchange. It is believed that, so soon as the 7.30 notes are all in, the gold received from customs (imports are unexpectedly large) will pay the government interest. Again, the tax-bill is *going to produce twice the revenue expected*—something enormous—and Chase is sure of carrying Government safely through, if our Generals are decently successful in the field. Moreover, there is as yet no *real* inflation in the currency; the Western banks are nearly all dead, and the Government money is running out other kinds. The market depreciation of the currency is not yet seriously felt in getting necessities of life—board, etc., staying at old figures. All sorts of manufactures are fifty per cent higher, but from other causes. Real Estate has not yet felt the upward movement, but will, in February.

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, October 28, 1862.

War affairs have remained most tediously in *stat. quo*. Buell's pursuit of Bragg was an utter failure, as I told you it would be. Bragg took 10,000 blood horses from Kentucky. Rosecrans is now General-in-Chief out there, and may do better, but I have no *very* great hopes of him. We *ought* to march 200,000 men straight for *Knoxville*—a point never yet menaced by us—that would completely hem in the Virginia rebels. . . . The Cabinet men are all *afraid* of popular outcry. Our Generals (Captains of yesterday) are all *afraid* of losing reputations they have never earned—dare not risk great battles. The soldiers are brave, but justly indignant at, and tired of, such long, useless campaigns.

McClellan is gradually getting his army across the river. By the time it is all over the rebels will probably have taken up their winter intrenchment quarters on the Rappahannock line—with a R. R. all the way to Richmond, their base of supplies. The Locos are making a political tool of McClellan, and clamoring that his delay has been caused by the intentional neglect of Stanton, etc., to furnish his army with shoes and garments. This is all gammon: Stanton and Meigs have done their best, I doubt not, and though there has been some lack of these things, if our soldiers chose to equal the endurance of the enemy they could have moved at any time during the last month. McClellan's army has gradually swollen to 140,000 men, of whom near 30,000 are on the sick list—being raw recruits and acclimating. The river has been so low that either party could cross anywhere, and for fear of another invasion, McClellan has had to keep about half his army in Maryland, guarding the fords, etc., for fifty miles. We had a devil of a rain yesterday, which must raise the water measurably. I hardly believe Lee will stand and fight.

On the other hand the Republicans are making asses of themselves, hounding on McClellan and calling him all sorts of names because he hasn't moved. Now it is perfectly evident that we have been crazily inactive—wasting the precious critical months—but *where* should we have moved? Manifestly, on Richmond—striking out with our *left*, via Fredericksburgh, or Petersburgh, while McClellan, with our *right*, was holding the *entire* rebel force, one hundred and fifty miles away! Evident enough to the child, that Lincoln, Halleck and Company are to blame, not McClellan. But neither party chooses to see this. The Administration, *per contra*, complain that the Governors have held back the troops, and that we have not received one half the 600,000, and I am afraid there is too much truth in this.

The scarcity of great men is painfully manifest, when one party has to erect McClellan as a political name and leader, and the other can find no one but that most wretched and selfish humbug, Fremont.

Foreign recognition seems now more probable than ever. You will observe Gladstone's speech. The French Mexican Expedition is appearing still more significant.

Are Republican institutions a failure, or not? If so—of course from their vicious weakness and internal dissensions in critical times. Perhaps the world is not yet ripe for them. But it is certain that Bates, Seward, and the other statesmen here, *privately* believe Democracy a humbug; their extreme federalism leads them toward a limited monarchy. But they forget the masses.

There. I can tell you nothing more of war except that Mobile is to be speedily attacked—as also are Savannah and Charleston—and that in my opinion either and all of these places will make a desperate defence. Perhaps Mitchell will try to attack Savannah by land. I have not so much confidence in "Old Stars" as some of my abolition friends.

To conclude: a general despondency, lack of confidence in anybody, is justly felt by the people, and nothing short of the most decided successes can save us—and those speedily.

We continue to like the Washington House amazingly and are as comfortable as possible—meals and rooms excellent—wish you were with us.

I am feeling very happy tonight over one matter. This week the agents of two Life Insurance Companies ("Mutual" and "New York Life") have been in town, and both having solicited my "risk," I thought I would make an effort to have it taken. To my surprise (and partly owing to judicious management and a few days' at the dumb-bells) the medical examiners of both companies have passed me, and advised their officers to take the risk, and I am expecting favorable answers to both applications.

They are for $2500. each. The premium on the whole $5000. will be near $30. per quarter, which, by cutting down some minor extravagances I am determined to meet. If successful in getting these policies, a load will be lifted from my heart which has lain there for six years. I shall know that in case of my death, Laura will be provided for—that she can not be a burden to you or other friends. She can go into a country village and bring up the children to working age, on the income from $5000. well invested. I do hope the thing will go through. If I get the policies I shall give them to Laura for a present on the 2d November—the ninth anniversary of our marriage. Your gift of $100. gives me money to spare for the first payment. All things have come together so providentially, that I almost feel superstitious—as if the Higher Powers were going to take me off, and were thus arranging that my departure should injure no one. The Doctors' certificates don't indicate this however. . . .

Gold still keeps up, though not so high. You will notice that the speculation in stocks has continued—Erie, etc., are up amazingly—shouldn't think they could go much higher. But all precedents fail in these times. Should hate to have money to invest now. Real Estate is the only thing which has not yet felt the inflation.

I wrote one letter to the *Times* on the "Gold Question" from Mr. Chase's standpoint. But Raymond was away, electioneering, and they gave it a dull, obscure place, and I feel rather mortified about it. . . .

To the Same.

Washington, November 8, 1862

Well, you see the result of the elections—tremendous Democratic revulsion—people sick of the unsuccessful waste of men and money, of taxes, tariff, etc.—*World* made a great hit—radicals down—open rebellion suggested to Locos elect by *Herald* and *World*, etc., etc. Have written to Ellis, boring him about his "100,000 majority for Wadsworth."—Do you want my opinion? Thinking the whole matter over, I am not so sorry at the immediate consequences of these results. They teach a terrible lesson; may infuse a little firmness into Lincoln and Company, and produce a hot prosecution of the War. The *ultimate* consequences may be bad. With a Loco majority in the House, continually increased by each state conquered from the South, and with Fernando Wood, etc., in power, the Union will be restored with *slavery*, if at all, and we shall have this War over again at some date.

But I am feeling quite encouraged (for the first time since Spring) by the receipt of some private Cabinet news from Judge Bates, which can I safely disclose to you and your friends.

Stanton pledged himself yesterday that we should have *both* Mobile and Charleston within thirty days—perhaps by the 1st of December. Expeditions are already under way, of a formidable nature. They will not wait for the completion of the new Monitors. Terrible fighting is expected. Again: the Mississippi River is to be cleared (D. V.) *throughout* by the same date. As soon as Mobile is taken, Montgomery, Alabama, is to be seized and all the Cotton States held. They are going to try to shut up the rebellion in Virginia. An army of 12,000 men is also cutting the R. R. south of Richmond. The Administration is just getting its eyes open.

Meantime I expect nothing from McClellan. Encouraged by the elections, and badly influenced by bad men about him, he is said to be rather obstinate in disregarding orders. He is also dodging down the Blue Ridge, and stopping up so many gaps as he goes along that I fear he will use up all his putty. His right wing is still at Harper's Ferry, while his left has reached Warrenton. I am afraid that he is extending his lines too much, and that Lee may mass *his* forces and fall upon us in detail. But in truth we don't know how many troops the enemy has, nor where he has them just now. So McClellan *may* be fooling with a rear-guard of the enemy. The Winter is commencing unusually early; at least, we had a hard snow-storm yesterday. It is a good thing that the army is in motion, but I still think that *via* the Appomatox is the road to Richmond, and don't hope for much at present from the grand army. By the way, McClellan's and Sigel's united strength is near 200,000 men!

Stanton's removal is urged vehemently by Curtin and others. He hangs on, hoping that next month's successes may reinstate him in public favor. McClellan is really in danger of removal. It is argued that the elections are over, bad as they are, and that it will make the matter no worse to take the bull by the horns and throw him down. Banks is *not* going to Texas, but will probably move *Eastward* from the Mississippi River through the Cotton States. I don't think Lincoln prudent in sending his ablest military friends so far South—to die of yellow fever, *à la* Mitchell—when the secession element is so strong at the North, and McClellan is still at the head of the army.

There. You are better informed than any other man outside the States. Save these letters for future reference. They are history.

. . . .

I gave Uncle W. [E. Dodge] a lecture on the creation and support of public paupers, and told him that the Republican party furnished an illustration of a noble cause injured by bad representatives. . . .

The Mutual Life will not take my risk—but have suspended it to see how I get along for a year or two. The New York Life *per contra* have taken it for $2500., and I gave the policy to Laura on the 2d—our wedding-day.

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, November 18, 1862.

News is "wanting entirely" except that McClellan was removed on that day, as I told you I thought he would be. The *World* and Company are making a row about it, and are going, they think, to run him for next President. However, if Burnside succeeds, little Mac will go under. If not, not. Mac made a little speech at Trenton the other night—he is not good at speech-making—the last sentence of which, you will observe, has a feeble squint at the Fernando Wood rallying talk. After a week's delay Burnside's army is again in motion—where do you think? To Fredericksburg, whence it will push at once for Richmond. It is marching from Warrenton by every possible road, spreading over an immense tract of country. I sincerely hope that this movement is to be coincident, as I suspect, with an advance *via* Petersburgh, since if it is not, I don't believe we shall take the town by a *coup de main* and if we don't take it at once we shall not at all. Mark my words: there will never be another "March to Richmond." Burnside's movement appears to uncover Washington, since the rebels are in force near Gordonsville, and Stonewall Jackson is still in the Valley with 30,000 men. But I am glad to say that besides the 130,000 effective men with Burnside we have near 100,000 left around Washington, Harper's Ferry, Baltimore, etc.

So that although Jackson may try to fetch Burnside back by an attack on Manassas, or nearer, I don't believe he will succeed.—I wrote Mother a letter the other day, telling her the probabilities of early successes.—Our expeditions move slowly and with great secrecy. The whole country is hushed—awaiting the first news from Mobile, Vicksburg, Charleston, etc., etc. We must work rapidly or not at all. The crisis has come.

. . . .

I have got some more literary work on hand, though not of an immediate paying kind. Found a good story to dramatize and am trying to see if I can write a good *acting* play ["The Novice"]. Have not been able yet to make a newspaper connection. . . . I am afraid that, writing so little I shall drop entirely out of sight and mind of New Yorkers. Meantime I keep at work. . . . If you get any spare time, do as much reading and talking as you can—so as not to get Robinson Crusoe habits. By and by you have got to be an "ornament to society" again, you know.

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, November 28, 1862.

I wish I had some good news to give you. In my last I thoroughly laid out the plans for the Winter campaign, but, as I feared, the large bodies move excessively, inordinately slow; everything seems at a dead lock. Burnside, waiting for the R. R. from Aquia Creek to Falmouth to be finished—so that he can feed his army—has allowed, either intentionally or otherwise, the whole rebel army to get in front of him at Fredericksburgh. A week ago, Hooker would have crossed the Rappahannock about 20 miles west of Fredericksburgh, swept around to Longstreet's rear, and gobbled him up. He was going to do this with 70,000 men and 300 guns, but a great rain turned the roads into mire, the wagons, etc., sunk to their hubs, there was no food, and the enterprise had to be abandoned. Burnside, *me judice*, made a great mistake in not allowing old Sumner to take Fredericksburg the first night he arrived at Falmouth—when there was no rebel force of consequence there. Our only consolation now is that Burnside may keep the rebels opposite him till Gen. Banks can land a tremendous force near Petersburgh. But Bank's matters progress as slowly as Burnside's. The devil's in it all. The Mississippi R[iver] Expedition will not start till the 10th December. I hear nothing from Mobile. Meantime Europe is uneasy; and the Peace party is strengthening at the North. There you have all the public news.

Washington is commencing to be jammed again, with the opening of Congress. Senator Wilson, Mr. Potter, Mr. Hamlin, Vice President, etc., are to have rooms at our hotel. . . . Yesterday being Thanksgiving, we missed you, and also missed the old New England rites. . . .

If the South succeeds in Secession, I think I shall go to New England, and try to get up a similar movement there. Will have no part nor lot in a disgraceful peace.

To the Same.

Washington, December 9, 1862.

Nothing has occurred to mark the quiet progress of our personal affairs. I have no newspaper work yet. Don't wish to take any but a first-class connection. Having made my position 'twould be foolish to lower it at all. The *Times*, I imagine, feels the crisis too much to employ another Washington correspondent, be he never so able; and the other leading papers are all full. . . . Meantime I am writing poetry, etc., and have passed the last two months very pleasantly. . . . Stoddard's book is not out yet. Taylor's is, and is not so good as *his* third volume of poems should be. Aldrich appears soon in blue and gold. W. E. Dodge, Jr., is greatly lauded by the press for his really noble efforts in the matter of soldiers' allotments. W. E. Dodge, Sr. is leading the van in the movement to send provisions to the Lancashire sufferers—a splendid idea, and one which, of itself, should make intervention by England impossible. . . . Ned Harland, *I believe*, has been nominated as a Brigadier by the President, and will of course be confirmed by the Senate.

Washington is crowded full of soldiers, officers, gamblers, harlots, theatres, circuses, concert-rooms—a perfect Pandemonium. Congress is at length in full blast. You will have read the President's message, and the various reports. It is generally conceded that Old Abe should have the credit of being the first abolitionist who has proposed any practical plan of emancipation, but that his message is too barren as regards the war, condition of the country, etc. Mr Chase's report is pronounced a master-piece by all except the *World* newspaper. In this verdict, I heartily concur, and recommend you to read every word of it with care. It is the ablest State paper I have seen for years and gives clear theories and facts relative to the national finances.

Nothing of an exciting character has marked the last ten days of the War. General Banks has at last set sail—and his squadron has left Fort Monroe behind it. Where will he land? is the great question. Some say he *is* going to Texas. I don't believe it. If true, the Government is ruined and Banks was a fool to accept the job. Some say, to New Orleans, to supercede Butler, capture Mobile, etc. Some, direct to Mobile. More, to Charleston. The last is possibly true, but I am more inclined to believe he is going to cut the Southern R. R. lines, at or above Wilmington, thence push for Weldon and join General Foster; thence, all together for Richmond—the broken R. R. preventing the rebels from sending reinforcements from the Cotton States.

A large force is still at Suffolk and Fort Monroe. I think that if we had any *Napoleon* at the head of affairs, he would have changed all these plans, stopped all these expeditions, and sent all the men under Banks, and those at Fort Monroe up the Rappahannock to Port Royal, landed them on the rebel flank, enabled Burnside to throw over his 125,000, and thus by sheer force of numbers, and the sudden surprise, have *annihilated* the rebel grand army and ended the rebellion. *As it is*, the thing looks hopeful, but I fear we are committing the old mistake (on a larger scale) of dividing our forces too much. In trying to conquer in several places at once, we may get whipped at vital points.

Afternoon—

Your letter per *Ocean Queen* has just arrived, and I am glad that you have suffered no personal ill effects from the frightful weather. . . .

To resume, about the War. Burnside is still on the North Bank of the Rappahannock—arranging, I suppose, to have pontoon bridges laid across, under cover of the gunboats, about fifteen or twenty miles below Fredericksburgh. It will be a hazardous undertaking—though his army is being largely reinforced. Washington and all other points are *full* of stragglers, convalescents and deserters. In this way our forces in the field are run down.

In the Southwest things have assumed a more cheering aspect. Grant is pushing on splendidly. He has also thrown General Hovey with 20,000 men, in the rebel rear at Granada, and I consider it a grand operation, since that point commands the passage of the Yalabusha, and the R. R. system of Mississippi—and was the place to which it was thought the rebel army would fall back for fortifying. I look to see the whole Mississippi River in our possession within a fortnight or three weeks. It looks well.

. . . .

To the Same.

Washington, December 18, 1862.

Yours of the 4th has arrived. By your accounts of the great deluge, I suppose this letter will find you in an ark on a high ridge of the Darien Mountains. Aquarius must have broken his water-pitcher against the Cordilleras. Perhaps, as Lowell says, "the 'tarnal bung is loose." Probably you will have no rain at all next year—43 inches in 30 days should suffice for several seasons. Meantime I advise you to take a little rum—and to try to use dumb-bells, or some other moderate chest exercise, which will enable your lungs to resist such weather. I don't like the mustard-plaster business.

We, too, are having a deluge, but it is one of—blood. 15,000 more braves are killed and wounded in an insane attack on a rebel position as strong as Gibraltar. It was the battle of New Orleans over again, with the slaughter on our side. To crown all, it transpires that the imbecile, infatuated Administration have—against all the hopes, prayers, instincts, and faith of the people—sent Banks' army to the Gulf, to form a new joint in that *bête noir*, the *Anaconda*, instead of sending him up the James River to attack Richmond in the rear. This horrible blunder or crime seemed so impossible that its revelation has enraged everyone and demoralized the martyred Army of the Potomac. Even if Banks should take Mobile it could not begin to make amends. The papers (*be sure and write me what papers you receive*—the *Times* account is the best) will tell you the sickening details. It is the crowning weight of our misfortunes. Burnside, however, has safely retreated to this side of the river, is reinforced, and his army is now about 125,000 strong. Meantime the Vicksburg expedition is delayed for want of coal! Nothing is succeeding anywhere. Stanton and Halleck will not resign, and cannot be forced out. . . .

Of course, the friends of Secessia, through their organ, the *World*, are jubilant. I inclose you one or two articles from that able and unscrupulous sheet, shewing you how skilfully it attacks our weak points, and how bold it is in threats against, and denunciations of, our highest people—even the President. Save the articles, on file with my letters, since they will be of value in the future.

Colonel Harland led a brigade in this fight, but did not get under hot fire, and was uninjured. Colonel Grif. Stedman had a bullet through his clothes—a clever miss. . . . Pollak and his wife are living quite elegantly in their new home and I take dinner there occasionally.

Judge Bates has finished an elaborate opinion to the effect that free negroes, native-born, *are* citizens. It is an admirable piece of analysis and historical review. When it is finished, I will send it to you. . . .

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, December 27, 1862.

No important change has occurred in the aspect of the War, but the smoke has gradually cleared from the Fredericksburgh battle-field, and the report of the joint Committee, together with Burnside's manly but anomalous letter, have shewn us the inside of the last fearful blunder. All this you will observe in the papers. Of late the *Times* has had the most calm and truthful statements of these matters. If you, like other expatriots, read only the *Herald*, you will have very hard work to get at the truth. Mr. Raymond had an admirable letter from Washington, over his own signature, giving the inside story of the Senate *versus* Seward imbroglio. Taken for all in all, I think the late Cabinet fiasco more injurious to our cause than Burnside's defeat—in which latter, by the way, it found its occasion—if not its cause. The extremists saw that somebody would have to suffer and ingeniously, while the whole country was clamorous against Stanton, made an attack upon poor Seward, who has had nothing to do with the war-management for months past. He has proven that the Senate charges against him were false—

that he knew nothing of Burnside's or Banks' designs—but they now say: "Confound you, we'll have your head, whether you're guilty or not."

It is the old story of the Wolf and the Lamb, with this difference, that the attack on Seward is really almost justified by his cold, impassive optimism, which makes people distrust him, they know not why. Moreover, he is the man who unquestionably has most influence with Old Abe, and is known to be very conservative.—Well, the whole thing has blown over for the present—the Cabinet, competent and incompetent members, stays as it is until the next great disaster. The latter, I will remark, you may expect to hear of, ere long, in the Southwest. Things are in a mixed-up state down there, and unless more brains are used than hitherto, we shall get badly whipped, I fear, in Tennessee or Mississippi—perhaps in both. Meantime Burnside, reinforced to more than his old number, is very quiet between the Rappahannock and the Potomac. Great sickness must ensue from the weather, but he has now 120,000 fighting men. The rebel cavalry annoy his right flank—at Dumfries, etc. You will hear of Foster's safe return to Newbern, and of Banks' supercedence of Butler. Also observe Davis's murderous "bull" against Butler, etc.

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, December 29, 1862.

Well, I see that if my last letter but one reached you, it must have been through the special courtesy of Pirate Semmes. We have news of the capture and bondage of the "Ariel." Why don't your line arm its ships and shew fight. Of course you have had an exciting topic of thought and talk in this affair. In my opinion, this Government made a great mistake in not hanging the first rebel privateersman taken, reprisal or no reprisal.

40,000 sick and wounded men are here!

. . . .

Christmas has come and gone. I was in Washington with the dear children. (Laura ill in New York). I filled their stockings with toys and candies, hung one each side of the chimney, and it would have done you good to have seen their excitement and joy in the morning. I often think how much more kindly they are watched over, than you and I were, dear brother, and hope that God will spare my life to see that they are never left to the tender mercies of distant relatives. . . .

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, January 9, 1863.

Real Estate is the only thing which has not greatly risen as yet, and, *mark my words*, there will be a *tremendous* Real Estate bubble this Spring. But of this you cannot avail yourself, since no one should buy R. E. which he does not personally know all about. By and by there will be a crash, and then—stand from under.

. . . .

Spaulding writes me that Wilson, managing editor of the *Tribune*, will take two letters a week from me, if I can find anything to write about. That is the trouble! *Civil* letters, just now, are of minor importance, and I shall find it terribly hard work to make a beginning—especially as I take not the slightest interest in this dirty Congress. However, the effort will require so much the more bravery, and I'm not the man to back out. I shall try.

Have had such an unusual lot of general news, that I've no room for talk about the War. Summary: Burnside, quiescent; Rosecranz, as successful as he could be with an army not half large enough, but Murfreesboro not a decisive victory. 'Twas really gained by our raid into E. Tennessee, which *I* regard as the best thing we have yet done. We have always been fighting that R. A., which enabled Jeff. D. to shift troops enough to whip us East and West. Sherman at Vicksburg—a bad mess, so far. Whole rebel army down on him, and Grant and Banks not heard from. Monitor—sunk. Wilmington expedition thereby impeded. . . . I hope *your* health is recovering. As General Williams used to say when he sent Henry Bond $1., at college—"Pray be careful."

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, January 18, 1863.

Semmes, the pirate—as *we* call him—the privateer, as he styles himself, has undoubtedly gone to cruise in Pacific waters, I think, from the general evidences. He will probably make rich prizes among our Chinamen, as we have no men-of-war there, and he would outsail us, if we had. For all his present and previous depredations, Uncle Sid. shews that we have vastly the advantage of him—our blockading squadron having captured ships and cargoes to the value of $60,000,000.

The news of the disaster at Galveston has come since my last. Poor little *Harriet Lane!* I have been on her many a time—a beautiful craft, but too low and fragile for a fighter—a kind of steam-yacht. Farragut has sent a fleet around there, and will undoubtedly smash up the whole rebel caboodle. They took the *Lane*, etc., by their usual treachery.

You will observe that the Vicksburg affair turned out as I feared it would, and that now the usual amount of crimination and recrimination is going on among parties to blame. Frank Blair is the only man who distinguished himself. The expedition cost us $30,000,000.—all for nothing, so far, though I suppose we shall ultimately take the place. There's only one way—to surround it on the land side and cut off supplies—that's my opinion.

As an offset to these troubles we have excellent news from Arkansas, you will see—5000 men, etc., captured. The rebel attack on Springfield, Missouri, the base of supplies for Blunt's army, was also repulsed. Moreover, I believe that Burnside is moving to-day with the whole Potomac Army. It is thought that the plan is to cross the Rappahannock 10 miles west of Falmouth, i. e. above the forks, get on the flanks of the rebels and force them out to a fair field fight. It is what should have been done at first, and as the condition of our Potomac Army is desperate I pray that it may be successful. 40,000 men have their time out in 90 days, and the army is fast withering from sickness and desertion.

Seymour, the *World*, Jeff. Davis, and Cox and Vallandingham, have taken advantage of the crisis to make a joint attack on New England, with a view to detach the West from the loyal cause and join her to the Gulf States, and leave New England in the cold. The real purpose is so to divide the North as to make the South succeed. But the attacks on New England are fierce, and do not seem to displease the West. I have been moved by the matter to-day, to write a poem,[1] which I propose to finish and send to the *Tribune*, during the week. Perhaps you remember my "Abraham Lincoln, give us a Man!" which made some talk at the North. This will be somewhat in the same vein, though not so good. I will send you a copy, if it is published.

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[1] "Treason's Last Device."

The *Times*, as I said, engaged me to write two letters per week. My first one—a short and unimportant one, was printed on the 10th. Since then, I have written two, with great care and some ability, I think, but neither has appeared. The one I sent last should have appeared yesterday. I don't know the reason. I have written to Spaulding to rescue it from the basket and see if it is not good enough for the paper, and that I shall write no more, as at present advised. Either they are too much crowded, or my style and views don't suit them. I never was so treated before.

Meantime I have quite a job on hand in the Norman White business of which I wrote you last. Am in regular correspondence with him, and seeing Congressmen, etc., and hope to make a good fee out of it.

We are anxious about your health. My own hospital is reported favorably. . . . You would gain nothing in safety now, by leaving Aspinwall for Washington. This town is a pestilent lazar-house. Thousands of cases of typhus, scarlet fever, measles, mumps, whooping cough, etc., while the small-pox is everywhere—one case being in the house behind us, and one across the street, with over 500 in town! You know how they used to bar the streets in New England when a case of small-pox occurred. Here we fear it less than scarlet fever. By the latter disease my room-mate at the office, Dr. Rowland, lost a beautiful daughter six years old, in two days, this last week. I tremble hourly, for the safety of our dear boys, and if we get through the Winter without harm—it will have been more than I dare expect. The highness and secureness of our rooms is much in our favor, and then I think we have more hygienic common-sense than many parents.

You observe the great rise in gold, the decline of Government securities—the Wall Street mania. When some plan of Ways and Means is settled by the House, things will regulate themselves. If Mr. Hooper's (Chase) Bill for a systematic banking process throughout the country should be adopted (I fear it will not) stocks would come down. But the great need is comprised in two words—*Military Success*. I suppose that Uncle

W. [E. Dodge] has probably bought neither Panama nor Government, but do not know. It is very difficult to tell what to do. I should sell my funds in Aspinwall for drafts on England, and put my money in Consols, if I were you. You would make nothing, but you would not lose.

Deeply moved by the attack on his beloved New England, Stedman seized his pen, and in a single night, that of January 18, 1863, completed the poem, which he has mentioned to his brother. This was "Treason's Last Device" printed in the *Tribune*, copied widely, and from East to West resounded its valiant cry—

Sons of New England, in the fray,
  Do you hear the clamor behind your back?
Do you hear the yelping of Blanche, and Tray,
  Sweetheart, and all the mongrel pack?
Girded well with her ocean crags,
  Little our mother heeds their noise;
Her eyes are fixed on crimsoned flags:
  But you—do you hear it, Yankee boys?

. . . .

Do you hear the hissing voice, which saith
  That she—who bore through all the land
The lyre of Freedom, the torch of Faith,
  And young Invention's mystic wand—
Should gather her skirts and dwell apart,
  With not one of her sisters to share her fate,—
A Hagar, wandering sick at heart;
  A pariah, bearing the Nation's hate?

. . . .

Sons of New England, here and there,
  Wherever men are still holding by
The honor our fathers left so fair!
  Say, do you hear the cowards' cry?
Crouching among her grand old crags,
  Lightly our mother heeds their noise,
With her fond eyes fixed on distant flags;
  But you—do you hear it, Yankee boys?

To Bayard Taylor.

WASHINGTON, January 25, 1863.

Since the *Tribune* will probably not publish the within, and you do not see the *World*, I cut out the Cameron *exposé* for your private perusal and digestion. An investigating committee has been ordered. Whether the matter can be whitewashed, or not, people don't know—*not*, is the general belief. It is, unfortunately, in the main true. My acquaintance with the Harrisburgh Republicans I am positively advised to end. General Cameron's crime is held to consist, not in the act, but in the finding out—since all sounded his praises when elected six years ago. It *may* be that he will have to resign the mission. If so, you have reason to expect the succession, since we are all pleased with your admirable management and dispatches. I have heard leading Republicans so express themselves. But my opinion is that there will be a disposition rather to pity the embarrassment of your venerable chief, and to retain him in the last public office he can ever hold. His day is over. And the Democrats may make such a row about this bribery matter, especially if they lose the New York seat, as to force him out of even this. All this I write you "unofficially," and as a personal friend. I am not a tale-bearer, but have an interest in whatever interests those whom I remember kindly and who have been true to me.

Laura has been sick, but is well now, and handsome and fat, like the children—thank God!—though death and pestilence are all around us. Our turn may come. The plagues of Egypt, even to the death of the first-born, are upon our devoted land. I am too proud to shew despondency in public, but will say to you, that this crisis is imbecile beyond conception, and that apparent firmness, like the laudable conclusion of the Porter Court Martial, is the firmness of desperation.

. . . .

Have you read that wondrous *Les Misérables?*

. . . .

I suppose you are in the same trying position with all loyal people here—i. e. we support a Government which does not support us, *clinging to it because the enemies of the country oppose it.* We lay down our lives, and wealth, and honor, although we know these treasures are wasted—and will do so to the last.

We see the same fatal blunders going on—the same old "Anaconda" business—the same lack of concentration; but we cling to the old flag more proudly than ever, because its foes are arising now in our very midst. The latest scheme is that of uniting the South and West, and leaving New England out!

To R. H. Stoddard.

Washington, January 25, 1863.

Your note came. The book had preceded it by a week, and I should have at least acknowledged it long since but for troubles in my Campus-Domesticus. Laura was dangerously ill for more than a fortnight; Arthur, ditto; I, hospital superintendent—at the busiest time of the year. So I tried a little fever myself, and put by all matters, except those imperative, until now. The reading of "The King's Bell" gave a sweet sadness to one of the nights when I was watching Laura. It is an exquisite poem—the tone and manner preserved throughout—you, all over—no other American poet could have written it, nor English, either, for that matter—it is all your own and of your ripest and best. The *World* writer, whoever he is, seemed to me to understand it better than your other critics, though, so far as my observation has extended, even the stupidest have been unable to escape its effects. Since you concluded to publish it without the accompaniment of the hoard of shorter poems which I know you to possess, let me say a word of wisdom. *Hereafter*—now that you have awaked from your seven years' nap—*issue a volume per annum*. Don't fail: you can easily do it, and it is the only way, in these latter days, to create and maintain the public appetite for a man's poetry. With critics and scholars your standard is obtained; but every true poet, (and the oldest the most), yearneth after the great heart of the people as the hart panteth after the waterbrooks. What a burial Uhland had! Ah, they have souls, those German peasants! It is as much one of the functions of genius to put its creations before all eyes, as to create. He who fails of the former lacks just so much power.

If paper and labor keep rising, who can print? Your book is perfect, except as regards the press-work, and that is as good as any in New York. But there is not a printer in that City. By the bones of Ben. Butler (and he and Victor Hugo are the biggest men I know of) I swear it. The New York presses will blur and render coarsely. Craighead is as bad—and as good—as any.

Well, the Bell reached here too late to be the Belle of the Season. Everything in the shape of a new book was bought for the holidays, but your copy did not reach me till a week after New Years, nor did I have a chance to buy Tom's book till last Wednesday. Perhaps I may say something about them both, in the *Chronicle*, probably not—it is late. I should like to, especially to shew Aldrich that I perceive and appreciate his lyric quality. But he don't deserve it, never having answered a letter of mine. Meantime, why did he leave out five of his best pieces—one of them being "Sing it, Sing it, Silverthroat," etc.? The book wouldn't have been crowded with twice as many. I don't like Blue and Gold in so large type; it looks too much like cheap gilt children's-books. Most of his omissions, however, I approve of, and, taken for all in all, the volume is one that any poet of his years, might be proud to father. I know some of his Songs by heart. He has a rare and delicate fancy—a perfect taste . . . he can do great things if he chooses.

Mrs. Stoddard's last story in *Harper's*, is, I think, her most skilful one. I received her message through Mrs. Ludlow, who with real kindness writes me once in a while all the news of my friends. E. D. B. S. surely has everything to be satisfied with in her last year or two of literary life—cruel as your other experiences have been. I am glad and proud of her success—as much so as of a sister's. Indeed, I only live in the doings of those I used to know, and still love—being all out of thought-life for the present, at least. Last Summer I studied and wrote, more or less, but when Winter comes on, here in Washington, we all—I, at least—put by books and take to business; to the business of making some money to live on during the Summer; to the sad whirl and the charities of the local War-scene. Do you remember us, at all? It is not certain that *Resurgam*, in any time or shape. I do my duty from day to day, according to my strength, daily thinking more of the affections, their culture and enjoyment—and less of ambition. Who, indeed, amongst the suffering and devotion here present, can be so base as to think of self. The humanities here developed by lowly men are grand and worshipful, whether wasted in a mismanaged cause or destined to win it finally. So Walt Whitman seems to think; he is in town, and for a month has devoted himself to the hospitals. I don't know him, though he passes me daily; but I guess he has a good heart and is a noble fellow, despite his erratics.

. . . .

The only poetry I have written of late is a translation of Hugo's *wonderful* "Barricade Song," which Tom Harland, who rendered half the Wilbour translation says is as good as can be—and a political outburst in the *Tribune*. I want to print the "Barricade Song"—it is worth it—tell me where and how, as I am out of the world.

. . . .

I had nearly forgotten to thank you for your kind regard for my Muse, in the Lorimer-Graham-German matter. Remember me to your dedicatee when you write him. I don't think so much of Boker's later poetry as of his early. Murdock reads his ballads here and praises them.

To his Brother.

WASHINGTON, January 30, 1863.

Your opinions on the nigger question appear to be lightly *colored* by your surroundings. I don't think you make sufficient allowance for the degraded condition of those poor devils on the Isthmus. Saxons and Celts, in earlier ages, and when equally ignorant and brutalized, were just as devoid of gratitude or conscience. I do not believe the African, from his structure, can ever be the equal of the Caucasian race;—but he can rise in his own line of mental, moral, and physical qualities. And the Christian or heathenish character of the negroes around you has very little to do with the great slavery cause which has brought on this War and afflicts the land. I think, to be sure, that our abolitionists are making idiots of themselves, blinding their eyes to the fact that we need *military success* first, and "all these things shall be added." Moreover, their leaders see that if the Union be restored they will perforce go out of power, and I am of opinion that many of them at heart are as anxious for separation as the Southerners. Thus, Horace Greeley proposes to have Switzerland mediate, and it is said that he has been actually in correspondence with M. Mercier and others, with a view to "adjustment." This is rank treason, though his motives may be honest, and I am indignant at him. But the Northern copperheads—Cox, Vallandingham, Brooks and Co.—are our worst foes. They are getting up scenes of violence at Albany and Harrisburgh and even at Washington, and, if we don't look out, we may have anarchy and civil war at the North. Perhaps we have got to go through one of those terrible convulsions, like the French Revolution, which always precede despotism or great reform.

I hardly know what to say of the War. The Administration feels jubilant, but no one else does. They base their helpfulness on the weeding out of such malcontents as Fitz-John Porter—their confidence in Hooker—the prospect of success at Vicksburg, etc. It is my opinion that Hooker will do nothing with the Army of the Potomac, so far as advancing from this side is concerned. The mud will *absolutely* prevent all movement for two months. Meantime the expedition against Wilmington is given up, and one against Charleston—in which all the iron-clads are to engage—is actually on foot. They intend to attack Charleston, by water, *about the last week in February*. This you will be glad to hear. If I can find it I will inclose you a letter by Raymond, in the *Times*, giving the mortifying history of Old Abe's interference in Burnside's disastrous campaign. . . . You will perceive that more pirates are successfully at work. The South bears the same relation to us that we bore to England in the last war. Having no commerce itself, it preys upon ours with impunity.

The currency question is the all-absorbing topic. You see that gold is 155! Chase says that if Congress doesn't legislate better, it will be 250. *I believe that if Congress abolishes the country bank system, all will go right.* If not, look out for breakers. I can give you no advice. You see the case as clearly as I.

I received a long, kind letter from Mr. Spaulding, explaining the reasons why my two letters to the *Times* were not published, and saying that they were excellent in themselves and gave satisfaction to the editors. So I wrote another one yesterday, which I hope may have better luck. But there is really no room for Civil Correspondence, and I shall write *very* seldom, since I cannot afford to lose the value of even one letter, over which I expend so much strength and pain. It is quite disheartening. However, I am succeeding with the business entrusted to me by Mr. White, and hope to make something, possibly $100., out of it, if all goes well. $100. are worth about $60., nowadays!—I cannot get a copy of the *Times* for myself, even; it is against the newspaper rule. . . . The *World* I receive regularly, and would mail it to you, but it is such a secession sheet that you would have no patience to read it. My letters to you, now that I have more time, are written regularly and at length, and contain a pretty good history of the times.

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, February 9, 1863.

I will at once see what can be done about the file of the *Times*, though I doubt if their system provides for sending mails three times per month, *via* a R. R. office. If it can be arranged, it shall be. My letters, however, are few and far between and intensely dull. They are not needed now. They used my last, and I sent them another yesterday. It is dull work, making money, with an aching brain, at $5. the column. When I was 20 years old, I could write all day. Now, every year, my head fails an hour earlier than the last. At 29, I ought to be able to make a living in some other way. If it were not for my office, I could not live at all. When the day comes again in which I am *only* dependent on newspaper work, I shall give up the ship. I can gain no better newspaper *reputation* than I have, and can make money easier otherwise. Look at Spaulding and others, 40 years of age—at the top of their profession as leading article-writers—and only receive $1,500 or $2,000. per annun. *It does not pay*. It is better to be a tradesman.

These reflections are superinduced by a summary, just completed, of my expenses for last year. *In 1861*, they were $1800. I resolved I would reduce $200. on 1862. Mark the result. In 1861 the *World* paid my personal expenses. This year, not. Total expenses for 1862—$2300! This, in spite of rigid economy, and with the cheapest board arrangements possible. In it, I include the $150. you spent for Laura and the children. But the last *three* years, of which I have kept accurate account have demonstrated that, even when paper money is not depreciated, I cannot live for *much less* than $2000. per annum, with my family.

The $1550. I receive from Government I don't have to work for at all, and this has saved my life. I am often troubled in my head, nowadays, and am ineffably sick of column-work. All this I tell you, in brotherly confidence, that you may understand how necessity and inclination constantly turn me away from a renewal of *total* dependence on the papers. They are very good for side-issues, and to keep on good terms with. . . .

I am busy with Mr. White's business, and have received a fee of $100. Great help! Guess I shall speculate, if I get a chance—though the good time is over.

A fortnight ago I learned that they were going to tax whiskey. This article was 30c per gallon. I had no money, and no one to write to with the news, so I have had the mortification of seeing it go up to 60c, and no profits to me or any of my friends. If they put on a $1 tax, it will rise to $1.30 or $1.50.

I cannot suggest to you any good way of investing your currency. If the War continues against us, it will become of less value daily. If not, not. You must act for yourself. Real Estate offers the only substantial basis. If Chase's banking scheme goes through, it will knock the gold speculators for a time. I observe that all Bank Stocks keep down, probably from fear of this. Am. Exch. 95c, etc., etc.

All goods have gone up, as I predicted to you three months since. Dry goods (domestic) have doubled and tripled. The Wall Street speculators have largely deserted Stocks for dry-goods and the Commission Houses have been selling the latter back and forth, on *certificate*. A. T. Stewart at one time bought up everything and made $2,000,000.

They say the "Public Board" is a great sight. Everybody buys and sells, and old George Henriquez presides. . . .

War news—none at all—except that Hooker is disciplining his army—that Charleston will be speedily attacked—that their yarn about "raising the blockade" was half-true and half-false, and that the devil knows how it will all end. I am writing a little poetry. Pollok lost a good deal of money, by his insane gold sales—against my advice, and without my knowledge. *This is private.* He and his wife sent their love to you, the last time I saw them.

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, February 28, 1863.

It is the last day of Winter, and quite mild enough for May, although we had a snow-storm of 9 inches depth one week ago—the last of which has now melted away. I suppose you are revelling in early Summer sweets by this time,—flowers, fruits, etc. Somebody's responsibilities must be pretty heavy at Aspinwall nowadays, since I observe that the last British steamer thence carried $5,000,000. which had been accumulating.

The most important event since my last, is the further rise of gold to 173. It fell back, but has rallied to 170 and upwards, and will vary, in my opinion, from 170 to 175 and even 180, until we have some decided military success. How soon the latter is like to occur, you can judge for yourself. Everything seems delayed. They are hourly strengthening Charleston, and why we don't attack is incomprehensible to me.

Chase's Bank Bill has passed, but is emasculated by not being made obligatory on the Banks. This they are trying to remedy by appending an Amendment to the Finance Bill taxing heavily the independent Bank issues. The House is largely under Bank influence, and is filibustering against it. There are only three days more of Congress, and as yet the Conscription, the Finance, and the Indemnity bills are not passed. . . .

Hooker is rapidly moralizing his army, and will fight hard when he does move. So will Rosecrans, whose forces are in splendid order. But the mud will absolutely prevent all motion for a month yet.

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, March 9, 1863.

At my desk to-day. Very weak and thin. Ever since my first attack of fever—six weeks ago—have suffered so greatly with disordered action of the *heart* as to more than half unfit me for business. Great pain about heart region, low pulse on left wrist, aching in left arm and leg, sudden weaknesses, etc. As I have been unusually temperate in tobacco, work, I don't know what to make of it. It is painfully discouraging. I can stand anything, and let the future slide, when my health doesn't break down. But, my God, I *cannot* bear to be *always* dependent, to know that I cannot *afford* to be sick—to look my family in the face.

On bright days, and when my strength is up, I try not to think of the future, and succeed, yet I *ought* to think of it closely, in spite of your suggestion to the contrary.

With unquestionable talents for business—rightly directed and a chance given—I am near 30, with a family, and, although I am certain of my bread from day to day, so long as perfectly well, am on the brink of the precipice of dependence: i. e. I am in no regular progressive position, and should be a beggar to-morrow, if the slightest change took place in my routine. This is not to be endured. It is time I was *established* in life. All my cousins, my classmates, are either laying up something, or are rich, or in high political or military places, and sure of the future. Yes, I *must* think of the future. It would be miserable cowardly insanity not to. I will not live from hand to mouth. Since my health slips away from me, it behooves me, more than all others, to see that it shall not leave me and mine helpless. It is no use for you to offer comfort and assistance; that is a make-shift and temporary, though you are good and true, and does not suit my needs.

All this I confess to you, and to no one else. It is my inmost heart. You must give me better advice than not to think of the future, if you can appreciate the *duties* and feelings of *a man*, whose time and talents are *wasting*.

So impressed am I with these views that I would go and work in Kamtschatka if there were a certainty of saving $10,000 in three years, or $15,000 in five.

. . . . You perceive the scare in Gold. With our military success it will rise soon again. . . . No *good* military news.

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, March 19, 1863.

Am better now. My ailments proved to be a kind of rheumatic pleurisy. . . . You have a hard life at Aspinwall, but the figures you sum up of your profits thus far quite reconcile me to it. Am ready to try it myself, whenever I can get such a chance. Uncle W., however, had rather keep me a poor newspaper writer, and have to pay my debts, considering that my "vocation," than ever recommend me anywhere to a business house. What does he know about vocations? When Managing Editor of the *World*, I needed and developed ten times more business talent than literary ability. The business of "G. W. H. and Co." was managed *well* and successfully. Given a *fair* chance, under established auspices—one eighth the chance all the Dodge and White boys have had—and I will make future provision for my family. I think it Uncle W.'s duty, either to dismiss me altogether, or help me in this way. The only business recommendation I *ever* had from him was that of *copyist*, at $800. per annum to a gouty old R. R. president, who couldn't read my writing, and where there was not the slightest chance of promotion. But enough of my Jeremiads.

I see a statement in the *Tribune* that the *Alabama*, *Florida*, and *Harriet Lane* are to rendezvous for the purpose of capturing a gold steamer, convoy, and all. So look out.

I think you are *about right* as to the conversion and disposal of your R. R. bonds—but I would get the proceeds into property of some kind as early as practicable. If Uncle W. had bought Real Estate when I first suggested it (I don't know but he has) it would have been a good thing, since R. E. has lately taken the jump I predicted.

Do you get your *Times?* Have had good subjects lately for letters, but have not been able to write. You have perhaps observed the fluctuations in Quick Silver Mining Company, dependent on the New Alamaden case. The latter was and is managed in this office. I knew what was coming, and if I had had my means could have made my "pile." The final decisions by the Supreme Court will be next Winter, and there is money in the thing yet.

Have made no decision as to a Summer residence, and wish first to know if you are coming home, as we shall probably be content with a more quiet place than you. Cotton sheeting, 50c per yard; silk $2. to $4.; boots $9., etc. Lucky you supplied Laura *last* Summer. Lizzy Weed is going to be married next month. Dodge and Harland are Brigadier-Generals, if the War lasts another year, and men of influence all their lives. Have at last begun a poem, for another book, which has been brewing in my mind for a long time, and hope to make something of it, but cannot tell yet. I write to keep from going crazy.

The War news is nothing, that I know, beyond what is in the papers. Everything is wretchedly prolonged and looks badly. I thought the Yazoo pass expedition nonsense, and it is turning out so. Of course the rebels have had time to build batteries *there*, also. Farragut has made a failure at Port Hudson. Nothing from Charleston, yet. Averill really made a splendid cavalry fight at Culpepper, day before yesterday, which you will see in the newspapers.

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, March 28, 1863.

The War is in *statu quo*, but I think that big things are at last brewing. . . . My opinion is that the attack upon Charleston will take place about the 10th of April, at the time of the highest Spring tides. There will be music. *Charleston est delenda!*

A reaction against the Copperheads is going on. The result of the Connecticut election is doubtful, but we hope to carry the day. Connecticut, New Jersey, and Indiana are the meanest States in the Union, just now.

All the contractors are Locofocos, and will make their hands vote the Copperhead ticket. You would be astonished to see the *immense* crowd of vulgarians who have got rich off this War, and their grandchildren will be the aristocrats of the future. *Tempora mutamur, et nos mutamur in illis.* All Wall Street (including some of our scaliest old friends) has enriched itself on stock commissions, also. Read the following item:

. . . .

One of the two contingencies which I have insisted on as necessary to save the National finances has, as we have seen, transpired, viz: the adoption of Mr. Chase's banking system. We now begin to feel its effects. Under the prospect of a great demand for New York bonds as a banking basis a sudden rush has been made for them, until now near $2,000,000. of legal tender notes are being converted daily into the 5/20 Bonds which I once recommended to you. The privilege of conversion ceases on the 1st July, and the rush now is partly in the belief that they will command a premium after that time, and partly from orders from banks about to organize. It is said that one will start in New York with a capital of $20,000,000. of which Mr. Aspinwall, a great friend of Chase's, may be President, perhaps. At the same time, the tax on, and other legislation against gold has made it a hard thing to deal in, and as you have very rightly predicted, a large fall in gold is now accompanied by a panic in the fancy stocks. But the second necessity (to save the finances) is a *successful* prosecution of the War, and unless that speedily commences, an upward lift will again occur. This is a respite, not a cure. Meantime, however, most of the Copperheads have been weeded out of the army and civil offices, the Republicans have made a clean proscription of their enemies, and the result is a wonderful renewal of confidence and patience. . . .

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, April 9, 1863.

. . . . The War news since my last is not important, except as indicating what it may be before my next. The Vicksburg business is a failure throughout. Interest centers upon Charleston. The attack there has probably already commenced. It will be a terrible affair. Great doubt obtains as to the result. I hope for the best. If we succeed, I firmly believe it will practically end the rebellion. The greatest distress prevails in the South. They have bread riots in Richmond.

Hooker's army is still kept back by the weather, but the news from it is most encouraging. It has 125,000 men in fighting condition, in splendid spirits, full of confidence in their General, and thoroughly trained soldiers. The Army of the Potomac *never* was in so good condition, and the next time it moves it will be successful. Hooker is in a bad location, and will need all his skill and daring. When he moves, wagons, except for ammunition, are to be left behind, and the men are to carry rations for a week. There will be a battle below the Rappahannock before May 1st unless the season should be unexpectedly late.

The Connecticut election is a glorious success, but it was gained by the votes of Republican soldiers and clerks sent home on furlough. Augustus Brandegee is elected to Congress. Old Billy Buckingham takes another Gubernatorial term.—Joe Perkins came over to see us last night. He is stationed in one of the forts across the river, and is as good a fellow and as affected as ever. I dined with the Polloks yesterday and they sent regards to you, as did Emma Page, who was there. . . .

I enclose a written narrative of the later proceedings in Quicksilver, by which you will see that things are progressing. All depends on Hallett's honor. *He* will make hundreds of thousands. Write me your views about it. . . .

To the Same.

WASHINGTON, April 18, 1863.

We were greatly frightened and distressed by your brief note of the 2d, written by an amanuensis, and signed by you with a feeble hand, saying that you were going to Central America for your health. . . .

Of course I would rather have you visit *us*, than the copperheads at Leghorn. In anticipation of a Summer with you, I have about engaged board for the family at Centre Harbor, on Lake Winnipesaukee, at the foot of the White Mountains, the most beautiful part of the World—they say. I think that a few months there, and in New York, etc., will suit both your health and pocket quite as well as a trip to Europe. But make your choice solely with regard to your health, not considering our wishes; and go *somewhere*, anyhow, and as quickly as you are able to.

Hooker's army is to move at once—a storm has come, as usual, at just the important time. Charleston is the failure I feared. All our hopes rest on Hooker now. Hoping *soon* to hear from you, and praying for your restoration to health.

From the diary:

May 6, 1863. Charley arrived sick in New York. Started at night for New York.

7. Morning in Wall Street with S. Hallett & Co. Stopped the rise in gold. Astonished and shocked to find dear Charley in the last stages of consumption. Dr. Sabine tells him he cannot live long. He has alarming signs. Wasted to a shadow.

8. Watched through night with my poor brother. He is content to die, but hopes to pass the Summer with us, at least, and receive the loving care of Laura and myself. My only brother—my best *friend*. What a suffering life—how homeless! how uncomplaining and considerate. Not a murmur passes his lips. Despite his emaciation he can get out of bed and back. We give him concentrated beef-tea and wine, etc. Wrote Mother of his condition.

9. Charley much the same. Weather pleasant. Dr. Sabine very attentive. Read Charley a good deal from the Bible—he prefers the New Testament—15th Chapter John, 15th Chapter

II Corinthians, etc., etc., the Sermon on the Mount. Uncle, Aunt Stuart, etc., all very attentive. Ellis and Ryan called with relations and other friends, etc.

10. Charley plainly weaker. Continued beef-tea treatment. Have resolved to go for Laura and the children before it is too late.

11. Started for Washington to get my family to see Charley before he dies. Left dear Charley with great reluctance, though he is in the hands of the kindest relatives in the world. On arrival in Washington, found Laura all ready to move, packed, etc.

12. Settled all my Washington matters, got furlough from Judge Bates, and started at night, with Laura, Fred. and Arthur for New York.

13. Charley's Death. Arrived in New York. Left Laura at Brandreth House, and hastened to Charley's bedside. His eye lighted at my appearance. I could not restrain my sobs, and he cried also. A perceptible change had occurred—I had come none too soon. After a few hours sleep, I sat by his bedside and talked of our youth, etc. About 3, his strength gave out so that I sent in haste for Laura. She came at 5 with Fred. and Arthur, and Charley was glad to see them. He now saw, and Uncle and I told him, that his end was near, and though he had hoped to see Mother, he drank heroically and calmly the last drop in his bitter cup. Brave, noble boy! At 6–25 he begged to be lifted to the chair. The effort was too much. He fainted in a spasm—and seemed almost gone. He revived again, kissed us all good-bye, and died in a moment (6.45 P. M.), so peacefully without a gasp, that we hardly knew the soul had gone.

18. Made agreement with Mr. Carleton. He is to publish my book in Fall, October, or later, in case trade good and no great change. I to have no copyright, till it pays expenses, and then back copyright. Called in evening with Laura on Dr. Dodge and Reverend Stuart Dodge.

19. S. Hallett & Co. have honored my draft for $120. and made me $150. profit on Michigan Southern.

20. Gave Charley's Tennyson to Stuart Dodge. Looked over Charley's papers with Laura. Will in Ellis's possession leaves $100. to Mary, $100. to Clem, $200. to Mother, $600. to Laura, rest, to me.

21. Moved my family to Craneville to board with the (C. B.) Huntingtons. Lungs troubling me.

23. Left Craneville (myself) for Washington, heat, dust, sickness, and drudgery.

24. News of Grant's glorious success at Vicksburg. Arrived in A. M. at my old quarters, Washington House.

25. Plenty of office work.

26. Unpacked my brother's beautiful hammock—his last gift. Gave Pollok a birthday present of a knife, etc. Supped at his elegant table in the evening.

June 3. Writing "Alice of Monmouth" this week.

8. Having succeeded in getting my friend Thomas Harland a place in the Internal Revenue Department, he arrived this morning, to my great delight.

23. Finished the Sergeant's story of the cavalry charge. Have had a handsome offer from Hallett and Fremont to go to Kansas.

July 5. Finished my first rough draft of "Alice of Monmouth."

12. Great rains. Dix's troops marching through to reinforce Meade. Rewriting "Alice of Monmouth."

13. Fernando Wood draft riot broke out to-day in New York.

24. Have been completely prostrated with the climate, and work on my book, during the last fortnight.

August 1. Started for New York on Steamer *Empire*, from Georgetown—in hope that the voyage would do me good.

6. Thanksgiving for the July victories.

7. Went to New York. Engaged with S. Hallett & Co. at $2500., for one year from September 15th. Called on Carleton.

8. Went to Greenwood and bought a half lot, and paid for removing Charley's remains thereto, from the receiving vault. Also ordered a hedge to be planted. Returned to Craneville at night.

12. Finished (at Craneville) my first complete draft of "Alice of Monmouth."

13. Finished revising my Miscellaneous Poems for my October book.

14. Went to New York and completed my arrangement with S. Hallett & Co.

17. Started in P. M. at 5 o'clock by Steamboat *City of New York* with A. C. Ellis and C. B. Huntington for Lake Winnipesaukee and White Mountains.

30. Arrived at Washington. Found Harland all right.

31. Resumed duties in the Attorney-General's office. My catalogue completed and bound.

September 2. Selling my furniture to Piatt, Johnson, O'Connor, etc. Finished revision of "Alice of Monmouth."

3. After great hesitation and much reluctance, resigned my delightful position in Judge Bates's office. When shall I find so easy an occupation—such congenial friends? The Judge seemed to feel as badly as myself, but agreed with me that I ought not to decline Mr. Hallett's offer. But it is a leap in the dark.[1] Dined at the Judge's.

8. Finished final copy Ms. of my book for the printers.

9. Making farewell calls and packing, etc.

11. Dined with Mr. Coffey at Judge Bates's. My last day in Washington.

Several years later, in a letter to the Honorable E. A. Rollins, Commissioner of Internal Revenue, Assistant Attorney-General Titian J. Coffey recalled Stedman's career in the Service of the Government: "Mr. Stedman had charge of the Pardon Bureau in the Attorney-General's Office when I was connected with that office. Our official and personal relations were most intimate and I had, of course, abundant means of judging his fitness for official duties. I can truly say that the Government had then no servant more capable, honest and efficient than he. He brought to the discharge of the delicate and responsible duties of his place not merely clerical fidelity and zeal, but the vigorous intellect, comprehensive intelligence and elegant accomplishments of a thoroughbred scholar and man of affairs. And he brought too the conscientious integrity and correctness of an honest man. Greatly to the regret of the Attorney-General and myself, Mr. Stedman resigned his office to accept more lucrative employment in New York, and we both felt that the Government had lost an officer whose place we could not fill."

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[1] Yet of late some good angel has aided me in everything. Perhaps my dear brother Charley. [E. C. S.]

CHAPTER XII

BUSINESS, POETRY, AND POLITICS

1863–1865

THROUGHOUT his final months in service with Attorney-General Bates, Stedman had been in active correspondence with the firm of Samuel Hallett & Company, Bankers. Mr. Hallett liked the younger man personally, respected his judgment and good taste, and consulted him on important matters of business, especially in connection with the schemes for the Quicksilver Mining Company. The financial acumen of Stedman is clearly shown in his business letters, in his reports upon the value of stocks, and the possibility of profits.

In June, 1863, Hallett had wished him to go to Kansas, there to edit a newspaper, because he felt that Stedman would at once make it "able, scholarly, and high-toned," and would win for himself and Hallett wealth and reputation. But Stedman had no inclination to fetter himself with hack-writing. He was determined to return to journalism only "as a last resort." His aim and struggle were as ever to become free to do his literary work: to earn his living in some way that would guard the integrity of his Muse; and which also would conserve his health that suffered immediately under the strain of long writing hours. Yet he dreaded the conflict in the business world. Writing at the end of his second year in Wall Street, he says: "I am again in the heat of my fierce contest with the most sordid and heartless part of the world—a contest which is no more natural and attractive to me than to you, and which nothing but *pluck* and a purpose sustain me in. Would you dare to put your name on a card like the enclosed, or advertise it in the *Post?*

It takes courage, I tell you, for a man of sentiment. Don't *you* cut me—others will."

Beside the Quicksilver Mining Company, a more important enterprise that Hallett was financiering was the building of the first section of the first Pacific Railway, from Kansas City to Lawrence, of which General John C. Fremont was the President.

Stedman entered upon his new duties in the firm of Samuel Hallett & Company, in September, 1863, and within a week he was earnestly at work upon *The American Circular*, a paper devoted to promoting the interests of the Pacific Railway; he wrote also special articles or paragraphs for different newspapers upon this subject. Several months later, J. W. Schuckers of Washington wrote to Stedman: "Your energy and courage in the great enterprise are gratefully appreciated. And they have borne good fruit in stimulating the activity of our friends; encouraging the faithless, and giving strength to the hopeful." The financial circumstances of Hallett & Company were at first straightened, and it was discouraging to Stedman to wait for some weeks before he received any remittance of his salary. Later, such anxieties were satisfactorily arranged, and by the month of November, Stedman who had evinced remarkable adaptation and financial ability, and who had made a considerable amount in private stock transactions, became a member of the firm of Samuel Hallett & Company, engaging also two private partners of his own.

A. C. Hills, his ally in the *Diamond Wedding* episode, now the editor of the *Era* in New Orleans, recognizing Stedman's financial instinct urged him to send by every steamer for publication in the *Era*, a letter on Commercial Cotton and Sugar. Similar requests came from other quarters, but were persistently refused.

The bright star in his horizon was the completion of his volume, "Alice of Monmouth, An Idyl of the Great War, with other Poems," which he dedicated to the memory of his beloved brother, Charles Frederick Stedman—

It was not given thee, who wast so brave,
On the proud field to fill the patriot's grave;
'Twas not thy lot, tho' graced with culture rare,
To dwell 'mid things congenial and fair;
Nor found thy gentle soul a destined mate,
To share and soften such an adverse fate:
Ah! sweeter, since they came so late, should prove
Thy now serener glory—beauty—love.

The initial poem had been written at Washington during the Spring of 1863; the others in the years following the publication of "Poems; Lyrical and Idyllic," 1860. His publisher, Carleton, made arrangements to have the book printed by the Riverside Press, which was most satisfactory to the author. Another cause of contentment to him was his arrangement with J. R. Thomas, the musical composer, to set to music the songs in "Alice of Monmouth" for publication in November, 1863.

In his diary, we find, on November 1, 1863:

Went with Laura, Arthur and Freddy, to visit my dear brother's grave. Found the monument beautifully placed, the hedge set out, and everything as it should be. It has been a real Indian Summer day, full of color and haze, and soft sweet melancholy. Our lot is in a picturesque dell, back of Ocean Hill; and there I shall lie also.

2. Received letters from Philip & French, Washington, ordering each 25 copies of my volume; also from Parthon-Waterbury; from Henry Ames Blood; from Judge Bates using kindest language in accepting my resignation; from Mr. Coffey; from Hallett, settling my salary comfortably. The tenth anniversary of our Wedding-Day. Our two darlings are well. The sky looks brighter.

3. Terribly busy day. Brought Melliss and Winchell together, and arranged for a winter stock campaign. Doing all sorts of errands for friends. Writing Hallett about his and my affairs. Arranging to contribute to the new paper the *Round Table*. Called on Willis, *Home Journal*, and other places. Mixing up business and literature again, too much so. . . .

5. Have arranged to-day with Winchell to buy and sell stock for him in my own name.

6. Saw Piatt's printer and gave him directions. Gold stock short—Winchell.

7. To-day, with great difficulty, I pay $50. for my new overcoat. Three years ago 'twould have cost $25. So much for war-prices, high tariff, reign of shoddy. Very fine notice of "Alice" in New York *World*—thanks to Stoddard and Marble.

11. Solicited to accept the editorship of a new Louisville paper at high salary—can't leave—"rolling stone, etc."

12. S. Hallett & Co's acceptance of my draft for $192.32 falls due to-day. Paid. Messrs. Greeley and Raymond send Pittsburgh Committee to me to ask me to take chief editorship of the leading paper there—salary at my own terms and stock. Singular coincidence that this and yesterday's offer should come together, and at a moment when I cannot break my engagement with Hallett & Co. If I were out of work I might await them in vain. Meantime my health does not improve, and my strength is not equal to such a responsible and arduous task. O for the lungs and sinews of some fools! Operating in stocks with Winchell, etc.

14. Advance sheets of "Alice of Monmouth" published in *Post*, *Leader*, and Philadelphia *Press*. Trying day in the Stock Market.

15. Called on the Stoddards. Am really gratified to find that these friends, whose judgment is so dear to me, are so pleased with my book. Went to Mass in the A. M.

16. Transferred to W. E. Dodge, to hold for the benefit of my wife, all the property now in his hands left by my brother Charles.

17. Very busy packing off friends' and editors' copies of "Alice." In such haste that I had to do it in a slovenly manner. Don't like the binding. The typography is exquisite, the binding common and out of keeping.

18. Have about finished attending to "Alice of Monmouth," and am glad enough to end the job. In the evening called with Laura on Will Winter and his dramatic wife.

19. *Round Table* offered me $100. for a Christmas Poem. Need the money badly, but declined it. The sensation-poem business is bad for my reputation and would react injuriously on "Alice."

21. "Alice of Monmouth" published to-day—600 sold in advance of to-day's orders. Carleton's trashy novel "Peculiar," will prevent him from pushing my volume—which plainly shews itself capable of a large sale.

22. Yesterday's *World* has a long and flattering notice of "Alice," from the pen of Stoddard. It gives me the greatest pleasure, both as a mark of his friendship, and of what I believe to be his honest sentiment as a critic.

23. Carleton has not yet sent the editors' copies. Was foolish enough to sell them, much to my disgust.

24. *Commercial Advertiser* gives me a very favorable notice. "Alice" is well received by the critics.

M. D. Landon, of the Treasury Department at Washington, in complimenting Stedman on his "Alice," says, "How you wrote this book, mixed up with the Potomac Army, Bates's law crib, and the "money-changers" of Wall Street, I don't know, but I know you ought to be proud of your book." It pleased Stedman that such comrades did not forget him; simultaneously, A. B. Johnson, also of the Treasury Department, writes:

> One night last week I gathered the choicer spirits of the Office at my house and had an official supper; among them were McPherson, Parnell, Harland, Charlton Lewis, now Professor Lewis of Troy University, and some others whom you do not know. Professor Lewis amused me by asking if the gentleman opposite him was the "Tom Harland who went to Europe with Ed Stedman" referring to your song of "Lager Bier." We had a good time, over whiskey, cigars, apples, and oysters, all of which had been sent me as little testimonials by official friends. I wish you had been there. We might then have had something else than Internal Revenue to have talked of. . . . I have lately made Blood's acquaintance. He came to my room escorted by Piatt and Harland the other day. He keeps doing things in the *Chronicle*. Piatt is in a state of flutter about his new book. Harland is as cool and quiet and dogmatic as ever. O'Connor more unequal, excitable, and irritable than usual, but as usual in that state when in a talking mood, drops from his lips pearls and diamonds. The ladies are as usual charming, and all speak of you with much regret and pray nightly for the failure of the firm of Hallett & Company that you may return to the Attorney-General and to them. We ("all us boys") avoid the door through which we used to enter so often when you were here, as we only feel our loss the more. . . .

From the diary:

November 26, 1863. Yesterday and to-day, General Grant gained his splendid and decisive victory over Bragg. Thanksgiving Day. Obliged to write all day on a Pacific R. R. article.

29. Wrote "Robes of Honor" for the *Round Table*.

30. Received telegram to leave for Kansas—Closed up my affairs.

December 1. Placed D. Fisher in my desk, and started for Kansas at 5 P. M. per Hudson R. R. R. & N. Y. Central—Great Western—Burlington—St. Joseph.

2. Reached Detroit at night. Read Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn" on the route. Not up to his former standard.

3. Reached Chicago. Sick at Sherman House with the wretched water. Saw editors of the *Chicago Tribune*.

4. Crossed the flat Illinois prairies and the Mississippi River. Towns all monotonous and dirty. Soil rich, and people of the earth, earthy.

5. Reached Planter's Hotel at Leavenworth, and received a warm welcome from the Halletts, Latham, Oakes, etc.

6. Wrote McDowell, and Laura. Started on horseback in P. M. with Latham, to cross the Kansas prairies to Lawrence, and then inspect the Pacific R. R. as far as built. I am then to visit Washington and procure Judge Bates's assistance in obtaining the $640,000 from Chase.

7. Made 18 miles last night over the most magnificent rolling country imaginable. Stopped with a Kansas "red leg" last night. To-day reached Lawrence in a cold rain—*wet* through. Evidences of Quantrell's massacre and incendiarism on every side.

8. Made 40 miles on the R. R. road-bed. Up and down frightful gullies, etc. My health improving, as it always does, under campaign life. At night lost in the Kansas River forests. Stopped at a log hut and slept; 9 men and women in one room.

10. Returned on horseback to Leavenworth. Met George F. Train relative to Pacific R. R. Received my commission from Hallett to go to Washington and procure $640,000 through Messrs. Bates, Chase, and Usher.

16. The *Tribune*, *Post*, and *Home Journal*, have reviewed my volume at some length, and favorably. But Carleton has rather neglected it, and though it has excited sufficient critical attention,

it sells slowly. Mrs. Stoddard's child—a boy—is safely born, and I am greatly pleased.

17. Arrived in Washington. Dined with Judge Bates and secured his assistance.

18. Brought Messrs. Bates, Usher, and Chase together, and matters look favorably. Telegraphed Hallett and Perry. Winchell arrived. . . .

19. Terrible cold on my lungs. Called on Secretary Chase with Winchell.

20. Dined at Blood's. Evening at Philip's musical *soirée.* Wrote Mr. Hallett a long report.

21. Quite sick, but have to keep at work. Passed evening with Winchell at Judge Bates's. *Round Table* reviews "Alice" very unfairly.

22. Winchell and I negotiate with Judge Black about the Quicksilver Stock. Secretary Chase finishes my business in a private interview.

23. Travelling all day to New York. Mrs. Lincoln and Governor Seward aboard—narrow escape from a burning bridge. Home at night.

25. Christmas at home. In P. M. crawled over to Stoddard's. Saw the new baby. Made the acquaintance of Edwin Booth—a noble fellow, apparently. Not a present to-day from a single soul to either Laura or myself—except some trifles from her friends here in town.

30. Breakfasted with George F. Train and Durant to discuss Quicksilver and Pacific R. R.

31. During the closing year I have sustained the irreparable loss of my only brother—my truest friend; have declined in health myself; have written and published a volume dedicated to his memory; have had my dear wife and noble boys spared to me—in health; have returned from Washington, after two and one-half years absence, to New York; have not suffered materially for means, nor been forced to severe labor; have passed my thirtieth birthday; have added a little to my good repute.

When Stedman returned from Kansas he found a letter from George H. Boker, written from Philadelphia on December 6, 1863, which Stedman says amply repaid him for his year's work:

I need not tell you how much pleased I am with your volume. You must have known that I would be before you sent it. There are parts of "Alice of Monmouth" that delight me. The description of the cavalry fight in Chap. XIII is just glorious. It lifted me from my chair, and made me feel as if I were in the saddle with four score hundred sabres shining around me. What a perfect poem is that under Chap. XVII. It has a quaintness that took me back to my first poetical loves, Quarles, Wither, Raleigh and all those old fellows; but it is a quaintness that does not smell of must and mould, but of fresh lavender, fresh in spite of its age, and suggesting the flowers of the field as clearly as when they blossomed upon the fragrant stalks. You understand the "flowers of the field" well enough to make the above figure plain. You must have known the real country intimately, to judge by the beautiful pictures of rural things which are scattered through your poems. You know what doleful mistakes some of our poets make when they come to Nature. What curious *bouquets* they make for her, composed of the earliest Spring and the latest Autumn flowers, all blooming together! They see Nature in my lady's conservatory, and fancy they know all about her. If we had a list of "Poets that should be turned out to grass," what a string of them there would be! I save myself by keeping my eyes on a well-thumbed copy of "Botany of the Seasons"—American Edition.

Of the smaller poems I prefer the idyl of "Alectryôn." It is simple, sensuous, passionate, the three qualities which Milton considered essential to all poetry. "Peter Stuyvesant" overruns with pleasant humour, and is, I think, excellent in its line.

On the whole you have every reason to be proud of your last venture, and to take courage for the next stride. The rewards of the poet in America are so slow and so remote that none but the faithful persevere to the end. I trust, my dear fellow, that you are one of the faithful; and that hereafter I shall have cause to be proud of the opinions of your genius which I have expressed here and elsewhere.

Responsive to every word of appreciation, Stedman had long intended to thank the literary editor of the Boston *Transcript* for past courtesies; foiled in his attempt to do so, he wrote, on November 11, 1863, the following letter to Edwin P. Whipple:

Returning from the White Hills, last August, I passed a day in Boston, and as circumstances have bound me closely to New York during my life as a journalist, I felt though a New Englander—like a stranger in your Mecca of all true Bookmen. Among a hundred whose minds I knew so well, I knew no faces—had no personal friends. But there was one pleasant office to perform: the discharge of a debt of gratitude to the literary editor of the *Transcript* for many voluntary, and very kind and cheering, comments on my volume published in 1860—and on ventures of later date.

These attentions, I acknowledge, were specially gratifying to me, as disproving the notion that Boston only reads her own books—smokes her own tobacco, and sees New York as a kind of Vanity Fair, where men are scarcely more conscientious in art and literature than in stock-gambling. The *Transcript* has been catholic and liberal, and others than myself, hereabout, have often had occasion to appreciate its genial and tasteful kindness. . . .

From the diary:

January 4, 1864. Worn down with doing a hundred things—circular day. Brady's partnership. Letters to everybody. Durant reports a profit of $200. to me—very kind in him, and just as I need it. Mr. Winter in the *Albion* gives me an exquisite and approving notice. I value his opinion highly—himself a poet. The *Independent* has a nasty paragraph and totally unfair—accusing me of indolence. This shall be the "last infirmity," in my case.

5. Tried to make Stoddard do the Bryant review, but the generous fellow refused with kind words. Dined with Brady this (Tuesday) night. He sent some books to Laura and Freddy. Writing a review of Bryant's volume.

6. Writing a review of Bryant, for the *Round Table*. Greatly interested, as it is the first piece of *congenial* prose I have done for years.

8. Finished review. To Lorimer Graham's with Laura in the evening. Met George A. Sala, Bayard Taylor, R. H. Stoddard, Hart, Benson, etc. Examined Graham's beautiful gallery. News of Thackeray's death received, and threw a gloom over the party.

On January 5, Stedman sent this letter of appreciation to Mr. Winter:

. . . I last night read your genial and beautifully written notice of my volume, in the *Albion.*

I think that, in many ways, I have often indicated to you my high opinion—not merely of your talent as a born and cultivated writer—but of your critical judgment and dictum. You can therefore understand something of the natural pleasure which your review has given me—apart from the still higher satisfaction that I have gained such a man for a friend. For the marks of a kind and generous friendship are everywhere beaming in your language, and for them I thank you even more than for the rest.

That book has been, on the whole, admirably received; yet everyone, who issues a volume of poems in this country, will receive praise from some quarters, and blame from others—either of which are sufficient to make him swear he'll never publish again. A writer who is sensitive, and undertakes also to be conscientious, is as badly off as the man who was both poor and honest. . . .

Who wrote the *Round Table* article on Bohemia? I have told Sweetser that he has made a blunder, and Stoddard agrees with me.

In return Mr. Winter said:

I am very glad to learn (as I do from your kind letter of yesterday) that my remarks in the *Albion*, on "Alice of Monmouth," have pleased and satisfied you. They were prompted not less by a sense of justice, than by friendliness towards yourself. Had not the poems been worthy of even warmer praise, I should not have written of them thus. I like the book very much, and I think you need not be disturbed by any adverse criticism it may chance to call forth. The *North American*, I see, has given it a kindly notice; nor indeed, have I seen any reviews, that run on the other tack. That passage beginning "Wear no armor" haunts my memory, day after day. . . .

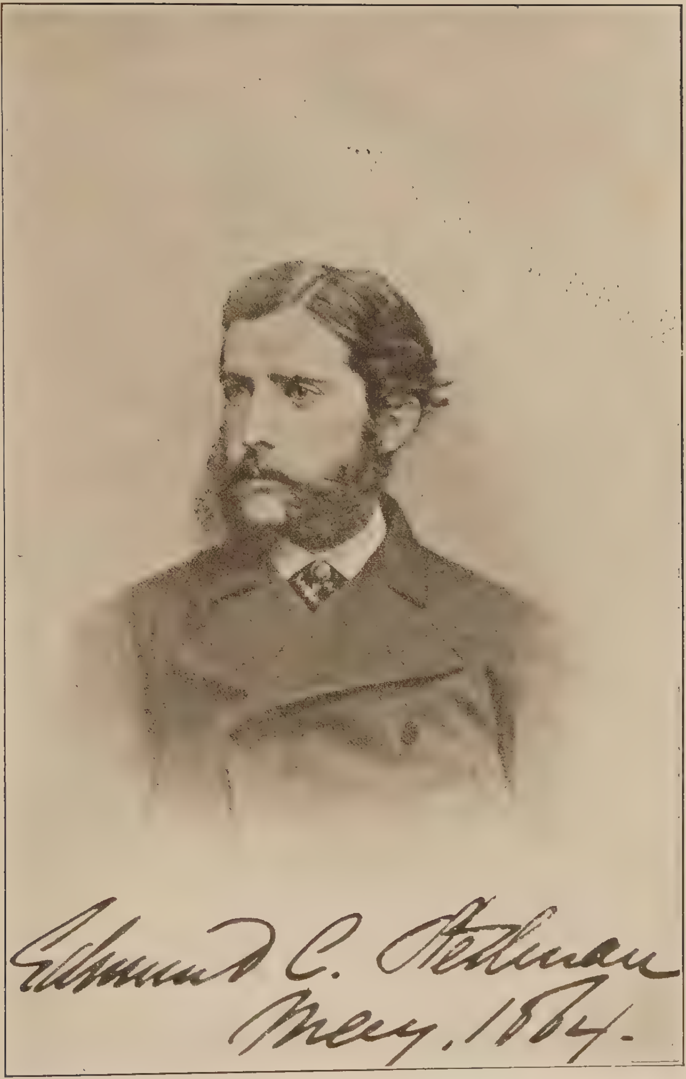
Wear no armor, timid heart;
Fear no keen misfortune's dart,
Want, nor scorn, nor secret blow
Dealt thee by thy mortal foe.

Let the Fates their weapons wield,
For a wondrous woven shield
Shall be given thee, erelong.
Mesh of gold were not so strong;

Not so soft were silken shred;
Not so fine the spider's thread
Barring the enchanted door
In that tale of ancient lore,
Guarding, silently and well,
All within the mystic cell.
Such a shield, where'er thou art,
Shall be thine, O wounded heart!
From the ills that compass thee
Thou behind it shalt be free;
Envy, slander, malice, all
Shall withdraw them from thy—Pall.

Build no house with patient care,
Fair to view, and strong as fair;
Walled with noble deeds' renown;
Shining over field and town,
Seen from land and sea afar,
Proud in peace, secure in war.
For the moments never sleep,
Building thee a castle-keep,—
Proof alike 'gainst heat and cold,
Earthly sorrows manifold,
Sickness, failure of thine ends,
And the falling off of friends.
Treason, want, dishonor, wrong,
None of these shall harm thee long.
Every day a beam is made;
Hour by hour a stone is laid.
Back the cruellest shall fall
From the warder at the wall;
Foemen shall not dare to tread
On the ramparts o'er thy head;
Dark, triumphant flags shall wave
From the fastness of thy—Grave.

Stedman notes in his personal copy of "Alice of Monmouth": "This lullaby was written months before the rest of the poem, and placed here as a kind of *entr'-acte*. . . . The opening is an echo of the dirge in Cymbeline, but the



STEDMAN AT THE AGE OF THIRTY
From a photograph by Brady

rest 'mine own.' In the last six lines I have more nearly pleased my ear than is usual." Later, he considered it the best passage of the poem.

Other notes in his personal copy are as follows: Division IV, 7, "Turning her violet eyes, their rays"—Stedman says, "This section very weak and commonplace, but I can do nothing with it. The whole story, in fact, is only a string for my scenes and lyrics."

Division XII, 1,—

> The schooners which up their channels pass
> Seem to be sailing in the grass,
> Save as they rise with the moon-drawn sea,
> Twice in the day, continuously.

He says: "All children have this notion, looking at the coasters on the Hackensack and Passaic. I did, when I was a little boy."

Division XIII, 7,—"The *Round Table* critic objected to this passage, in that, at the word "*Charge*" a change is made from the dactylic to the anapæstic movement "as painful to the ear of the reader as the sudden breaking of a pleasant gallop is to a horseman." If this writer had assisted at such a charge, he would know that its wild and extreme fury of speed and sound is based on just this change, in the beat of the hoofs, from the preceding gallop. The latter is only a prelude to the death-*run*, and I see that, almost unconsciously to myself, I hit on the exact movement for its expression."

> "CHARGE!" and we sprang, while the far echo rang,
> And their bullets, like bees, in our ears fiercely sang.
> Forward we strode to pay what we owed,
> Right at the head of their column we rode;
> Together we dashed, and the air reeled and flashed;
> Stirrups, sabres, and scabbards all shattered and crashed
> As we cut in and out, right and left, all about,
> Hand to hand, blow for blow, shot for shot, shout for shout,
> Till the earth seemed to boil with the heat of our toil.

Division XIV, 4,—

> The air above seemed heavy with errant souls,
> Dense with ghosts from those gory forms arisen,—

"In the wet nights following the Virginia battles," he says, "I could not think of the slain rising, as in the grand old German picture, to resume their conflict in the middle air, but only of their aimless, shapeless *spirits* thickening and making horrible the fogs."

Division XX, 4,—"There was just such an Aurora—a marvellous affair—in the Fall of 1858 or 1859."

A note made on "The Test," another poem in the same volume, reads: "In this poem the *terza rima* is essayed, with the additional refinement of the alternation of masculine and feminine endings. It was rejected by the *Atlantic Monthly*—the first MS. ever sent that magazine by me."

In his review in the *Albion*, the dignified weekly representative of the British residents in America, Mr. Winter said:

> Mr. Stedman is one of the younger poets of the country, and this book is his second important contribution to its literature. We have read it with deep interest and pleasure, and, unless our judgment be very much at fault, it entitles its author to be ranked among the best American Poets. It is not, indeed, a work of marked originality as to manner; on the contrary it presents, in this respect, indications of the influence, exercised upon the mind of the writer, by Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, and other strong-natured poets; but its substance is its author's own. In thought, sentiment, imagery, fancy, and fire, its owes nothing to any other source. Its author writes out of his own mind and heart, and his vigorous utterances are polished with the severe taste that belongs to an artistic nature. Hence the vital and enduring merit of these poems. Nor do they, as so many poems do, lack the element of popularity. . . . We like especially the poem of "Alectryôn," a piece of blank verse not unworthy of the greatest living poet, Tennyson. Its pictures are superb; witness the following:
>
> But when the passion of their meeting fell
> To dalliance, the mighty lovers, sunk

Within those ivory couches golden-fleeced,
Made wassail at the wondrous board, and held
Sweet stolen converse till the middle night.
And soulless servitors came gliding in,
Handmaidens, wrought of gold, the marvellous work
Of lame Hêphæstos; having neither will,
Nor voice, yet bearing on their golden trays
Lush fruits and Cyprian wine, and, intermixt,
Olympian food and nectar, earth with heaven.
These Erôs and Alectryôn took therefrom,
And placed before the lovers; and, meanwhile,
Melodious breathings from unfingered lutes,
Warblings from unseen nightingales, and songs
From lips uncrimsoned, scattered music round.

Concerning Alectryôn, Stedman himself remarks: "This poem, the art of which I shall never again equal, was begun in 1861, and not regarded as complete till 1863. I am not aware that the subject ever before received the same form of treatment, or any idealization at all." And—after fifty years—"This is a real 'antique'—in so far that it preaches no moral—has no 'reflections'—and so is not open to the objection I brought against Lowell's 'Rhœcus' as compared with Landor's 'The Hamadryad.'" [See "Poets of America," pp. 311, 312.]

Autobiographic in its significance is "Refuge in Nature," written also during the Washington period, and included first in "Alice of Monmouth and Other Poems."

It were base
To join alliance with the hosts of Fate
Against thyself, crowning their victory
By loose despair, or seeking rest in death.

More wise, betake thee to those sylvan haunts
Thou knewest when young, and, once again a child,
Let their perennial loveliness renew
Thy natural faith and childhood's heart serene.
Forgetting all the toilsome pilgrimage,
Awake from strife and shame, as from a dream

Dreamed by a boy, when under waving trees
He sleeps and dreams a languid afternoon.
Once more from these harmonious beauties gain
Repose and ransom, and a power to feel
The immortal gladness of inanimate things.

There is the mighty Mother, every young
And garlanded, and welcoming her sons.
There are her thousand charms to soothe thy pain,
And merge thy little, individual woe
In the broad health and happy fruitfulness
Of all that smiles around thee. For thy sake
The woven arches of her forests breathe
Perpetual anthems, and the blue skies smile
Between, to heal thee with their infinite hope.
There are her crystal waters: lave thy brows,
Hot with long turmoil, in their purity;
Wash off the battle-dust from those poor limbs
Blood-stained and weary. Holy sleep shall come
Upon thee; waking, thou shalt find in bloom
The lilies, fresh as in the olden days;
And once again, when Night unveils her stars,
Thou shalt have sight of their high radiance,
And feel the old, mysterious awe subdue
The phantoms of thy pain.

From the diary, January 9, 1864:

Loaned poor Addey $10. I hope he'll be able to pay it. Bayard Taylor and wife called on us in P. M. Low, the publisher, suggests idea of a little volume of Selections from Thackeray and wants me to edit it. Read in Greek Testament. Bought Fred. Latin Lessons.

11. Busy day downtown. In evening with Laura and Miss Wylie to Taylor's birthday reception. Present—Stoddard, Aldrich, Sala, Thompson, Barstow, Graham and wife, Taylor and wife, self and wife, Miss Wylie. Delightful evening. Gave cigar case to Bayard Taylor.

15. Started for Washington to see about the speculation in *Quicksilver*.

16. Saw Judge Black and Mr. Wills. Dined with Judge Bates. Stopping at Willard's.

17. Winchell, Harland, Latham, etc. With Train and Harland in evening to Philp's. Met Sala, etc.

18. Negotiating with the Chase Central Committee to establish a Bureau of Action in New York. It looks as if I should be forced into the campaign.

19. Accepted the confidential agency for the Chase Committee in New York. Telegraphed for Ellis.

20. Ellis arrived. Interviews with Senator Pomeroy, F. B. Staunton and others. Received $1000. each for expenses. Hallett and Durant settled *their* arrangement. Got four months leave of absence of Hallett. Started with Ellis for New York.

22. Hard at work among the politicians. Don't like the brood, but intend to do as well as any of them. Got $15. from *Round Table* for Bryant review.

23. Continuing the Chase campaign. Saw Opdyke, etc. Engaged headquarters Gibson's Building. Have concluded not to come out ostensibly for Chase, but to unite the radical elements, and the friends of all other candidates. In the evening was made a member of the Central Committee of five.

25. Passed the whole day organizing. Saw Mr. Greeley, Gay, Opdyke, Stevens, Lowry, etc. Took Kirk's "Charles the Bold" to review for the *Round Table*.

26. Politics with Opdyke, Field, Greeley, Lowry, etc. Have secured several members of the Committee. Engaged rooms for Central Committee on corner 13th Street and Broadway.

27. Politics. Fussing among impracticable men with the Greeley, Opdyke, Field address. Organization going on.

28. Politics. Very hard at very distasteful work. First meeting at headquarters at night.

29. Politics. Find that Mr. Chase has shockingly mismanaged all his patronage. The Custom House, etc., in the hands of his enemies, and of many disloyalists.

30. Quarterly premium on Life Insurance due to-day. Paid. Wrote Constitution for Unconditional Union Central Committee.

31. Politics. Have found time, in the last week, to read a little Greek and Latin, and Kirk's "Charles the Bold." Passed a pleasant P. M. at Stoddard's.

February 1. Hard at work on politics—Saw Field, Tousey, Gould, Sinclair, Parker. Successful organization at night of

Unconditional Union Central Committee. All my officers appointed, and my Constitution adopted.

2. Latham arrived. At work *all* day. At night wrote long letters to Mr. Chase's secretary, and others.

3. At work with Ellis, trying to raise funds for our Committee in Wall Street. Wrote on review of Kirk's "Charles the Bold."

4. Politics. Winchell arrived. John Thompson wishes me to prosecute his $50,000. claim at Washington.

6. Politics. Waiting for money from Washington. Attacked by H. Clapp, in the *Leader*, for connection with the *Round Table*. Successful Public Meeting in evening of our Committee. Greeley spoke.

7. Saw Hallett at Jersey City in the evening. In high spirits over immense contract with Perry & Durant and Pacific Railroad Company."

9. Long and wearisome business interviews about regulating the Custom House.

10. At home trying to write review of Kirk's "Charles the Bold." My lungs very sore. I hesitate about any plans for the future. At any moment this constant suffering may have a sudden end. I strive hard to live for Laura and the children. But they do not know how I have to struggle with this terrible complaint.

14. Went to Yorkville to confer with Winchell. Sick as I am, must go to Washington tomorrow night.

15. Deposited $1300. with Polhamius & Jackson, and after a hard day's work started for Washington.

16. Arrived in Washington. Found matters shockingly mismanaged during my absence. Fear it is too late to make much in Quicksilver. Telegraphing and writing to New York, etc., all day. Saw Judge Black, Coffey, Wills, Blood, Piatt, Latham, Durant, etc. The political Committee at a deadlock.

17. Bought through P. & J. 50 shares Mississippi and Missouri at 46. $5000. Land Grants 70. Telegraphing, etc., about Quicksilver and Land Grants.

18. Telegraphing, etc. Mississippi and Missouri rising. Stocks, politics, etc. Hard at work. Evening at theatre with Mrs. Blood and the Palmers. Booth in "Richelieu." Dined with Governor Stanton, Latham and Miss Bulls.

19. Stocks and politics. Gradually bringing light out of darkness. Dined with Mr. Brady and Mr. Latham.

20. Quicksilver, etc. Politics. Dined with Judge Bates, and read his last charming letter to me. Very busy. Glad Saturday night has come.

23. Great Quicksilver case commenced. Telegraphed to sell stock. New York *Times* has a long review of "Alice of Monmouth."

24. Latham arrives with proposition from P. & J. to start Banking House in Washington. I *dare* not, on account of my health, accept. Shall try to make up the House among my friends. Started home at night.

25. Arrived in New York. Saw Polhamius & Jackson in relation to the Washington Banking House. Collecting my meagre profits on Quicksilver—my associates having mismanaged it.

26. Collected profits and sent Latham check for $529.29. Made Durant take in his 100 shares Quicksilver. Saw Gay, Marble, etc., on politics. Collected $20. for my *Round Table* article on Kirk.

28. Mr. Stewart arrived from Washington, to see about the arrangement for a Washington Banking House. Took him to ride in the Central Park and then took him to Jackson's. Arrangement nearly completed. Called on Stoddards and Taylors, in evening.

March 5. Finished the poem on the Divorce of Margaret of Flanders—Arras, 1404. Made $450., on Mississippi and Missouri. Great Meeting of Political Committee—Train afterward at house.

6. R. H. and E. Stoddard called. Evening at Taylor's, making nonsense rhymes with Taylor, Stoddard, etc.[1] The Grahams, etc. present—pleasant evening. Read sharp review of "Alice" in *Leader*. The writer berates the book for its roughness of verse. He omits to allude to the carefully and conscientiously finished minor poems. My first volume, *per contra*, was criticised for "too elegant finish" and "cold accurate classicism."

11. Wrote the address of the Unconditional Union Committee to the Loyal Citizens of the United States. I have written it with

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[1] These [Sunday] evenings were enlivened by the "Diversions," which in later years Bayard Taylor published in amplified form in the "Echo Club," and which afforded an entertainment sparkling with wit and humour. This amusement was the continuation of a *jeu d'esprit* that originated in the middle of the fifties, when the trio of poets, Stoddard, Taylor and Fitz-James O'Brien, vied in the exuberance of their imagination with each other in the production of short comic poems whenever they met in Stoddard's quarters.—"*On Two Continents*," *by Mrs. Bayard Taylor.*

an earnest and conscientious pen, and shall never be ashamed of its authorship.

15. Wrote article for George Francis Train on the Credit Mobilier.

16. Sent my last poem to the Committee on the Sanitary Fair Newspaper as my donation. Made no money this week as yet, owing to my excessive caution. Have 100 Illinois Central on hand—a dangerous stock—bought on Middleton's advice.

21. Received *Athenæum* notice of "Alice." Bet F. M. McDowell $50. that we don't take Richmond *before* the 1st of August, 1864. *Present*—Alex. Stewart, B. B. French. Hope I'll lose *my bet.*

23. Settled the estate of my brother with Uncle William (executor) to-day. Total *balance* to Laura and me, about $5680. Paid Uncle $1100. due him for some years, he kindly throwing off some interest—reducing the balance to $4500. Bonds and cash. If I were not making money, this Spring, should not have felt it right to pay this debt, since the money is the "price of blood" and should have all been settled on Laura.

26. A good day at business, the movement in Illinois Central commenced. A good angel seems to help me this Spring—all I lack is health; but I am willing to let even that go, if my dear ones can have their support insured.

27. Wrote long letter to Hallett, closing our matters. Middleton called, and gave me valuable advice as to my operations. Easter Sunday—I hope that in a fortnight more I can enjoy my Sundays and spend them as I should.

28. Very laborious day, but very successful one in the Stock Market. Three more such days, and if my strength holds out, and the market does not break, I leave stocks alone for the season.

29. Stocks working well. Health very poor.

30. Same record as yesterday. At the Evening Exchange every night. Bought 1000 shares Reading for T. C. Durant.

31. Realized on some of my Reading, making for self $1000.

April 1. Frightful weather for a week past, distressing me greatly. Realized on some more Reading. Bought a little stock to give Ellis a boost.

2. Terrible weather. This week has been, pecuniarily, the most astoundingly fortunate one of my adverse life. I have made $5000. since Monday A. M., and am too sick to have it turn my head. "All things come round," but O, how much too late!

4. Resolved to take one more week in Reading—on good

advice. Bought 400 more for self and 100 for Ellis. Did it with some compunctions as it is against my principles to take so large a line. Stocks lower in P. M.

5. Panic in stocks this morning. Took all my courage to support myself and friends in holding on to stock. Made a rally at noon. Went home after a ticklish day, feeling that the crisis had passed.

6. Reading rising splendidly. Realized on 100 for Ellis and 100 for self. Hope to make beyond my best expectations. Went to Sanitary Fair in P. M. with Laura. Magnificent, though bizarre arrangement. Bought season tickets.

7. Terrible fall (break) in Ft. Wayne and panic in the market. Reading sympathized to a serious degree, and though there is a rally this evening, I fear it will alarm the banks, and do not know [how] it will end. Market lower in the evening. Kept my courage and did not sell. Rally arrived at the eleventh hour.

8. Market all better. The sheep again crazy to buy. Taken with symptoms of diphtheria.

12. Called on the Stoddards. Met Bayard Taylor and Graham, etc. At night foolishly bought nine paintings at the Coleman-McEntee-Chattuck sale—some good, some bad; think I can sell the latter at an advance.

14. Went down late this A. M. To my surprise found that stocks had all been very high, and that but for one hour's tardiness I might have realized *handsomely*. Saw signs of swift decline and began to sell—at a loss.

15. Terrible panic in stocks. Have got all out with loss of $2000. Serves me right for delay—yet I have been quicker than any of my friends.

16. Panic continues, involving a fall of 20 per cent and even 30. Many of my acquaintances suffer horribly. I have every reason for gratitude.

18. Renewal of the great panic. Leading brokers going by the Board. Don't know whether I shall get a settlement of my accounts, or my money. Even the banks may suspend. Signed my will (in duplicate) to-day.

19. Drew $6500. from my brokers and have it safe in "greenbacks." In evening at Fair.

21. Bought $5000. Government 6s coupon of '81. Paid premium on my Life Insurance policy to October 30th.

28. Contracted with Mrs. Emily F. Smith to buy her house No. 184 E. Tenth Street, for Laura, for $9000., and, paid $20. down. A wonderfully cheap purchase—the house I have always longed to possess. It seems a dream.

May 1. Received characteristic letter from Judge Bates in relation to newspaper paragraph saying I had "made a fortune." Boarding outside with family.

9. Grant victorious. God be praised! Received Deed of Laura's house from Mrs. Smith paying *her* in full. Paid also all back liens for taxes, etc., raised Peckham mortgage. Paid over $3000. in all. $6000. only now remaining on the house and lot. Insured books and pictures.

14. Closing up my last affairs prior to leaving the city for the season. Have resolved to make one last effort for life and to *rest* in New England through the whole Summer, regardless of the waste of time and money.

16. Left for Norwich at 5 P. M. on *City of New York*. Goodbye New York. I go to a region where there are patriots still!

17. Breakfasted in Norwich at Wauregan. Arrived in Danielsonville at night. Offered Abby Woodworth a home in New York for next winter.

19. Back to Danielsonville. Laura's mother and sisters are in every way modest, industrious, self-denying, and intelligent. I deeply regret that my years of poverty have prevented me from doing more for them.

24. Via Worcester to Springfield and Northampton. Took quarters at the Mansion House at $30 per week. Visited with my son Fred. the seminary where I studied thirteen years ago. Looked at the old house where I loved and was engaged to ——.

25. Met my old teacher. He is gray, and not half so formidable as I used to think him. Called on Mrs. Thayer. Went through the old woods on Round Hill—where I was a spooney. Some students rusticating here—their songs revive old days.

29. Beautiful weather. To ride with Laura and children in P. M. It still is a dream to me that we are not distressed for money. As my strength comes back, I feel an idle man's ennui, and the desire to write, to evolve something impels me to break my pledge of a whole season's laziness.

29. Went to Episcopal Church in the morning. Service as usual—sermon unmixed with brains. Essay! *On the intellect of*

the Clergy of the Church of England. The Clergy of the Church of England have no intellect.

June 15. Finished "Holyoke Valley." Here now, is a poem which I *know* to be artistic and full of feeling—equal to anything which the *Atlantic* has published for months. But I cannot send it there, because they have time and again refused the best productions of New York writers. Last Summer they sent back *the best* short poem I ever wrote—"The Test"—afterwards printed in my book, and copied everywhere. So I must send it to the *Round Table* where the "impersonal" rule hides its author's name, and where it can reach but a limited audience. An American, New York poet sings against the wind.

Leaving Northampton by the middle of July, Stedman took his family to Centre Harbor, N. H., finding comfortable quarters in a farmhouse overlooking the Lake.

July 21. Chapter of misfortunes to-day. Took Laura, Fred. Arthur and Abby [Woodworth] sailing. High wind rose, drove us down the Bay into Black Cat Cove. Made a fire, and set the island (96 acres) in a blaze to our great dismay. Fought it in vain. With great exertions got out of the Cove against the wind. Broke our helm, and made for the mainland steering with an oar. Reached terra firma. Found a hospitable farmer, who brought us home for $5. Find the owner of the island to be Captain of the steamer *Lady*.

22. Island in a blaze. Steamer trying to save the cut wood. Told Captain Sanborn frankly that we were the innocent incendiaries. Went with him to the fire in the P. M. We are saving the wood, but the sail yesterday will cost me a deal of my little hoard of money.

31. Bet F. M. McDowell on March 1, $50. that we don't take Richmond before the 1st of August, 1864. Won. Met General Busteed and Henry Morford (novelist, etc.) in the *Flume*—the latter accompanied by his daughter.

August 1. By rail and stage home. The Morfords accompanying us to Centre Harbor. News of the shooting of Hallett [in the main street of Kansas City] last Wednesday! This will turn the course of my life again.

2. Doing the host to the Morfords, riding, etc. Grant sprung

his mine at Petersburgh Sunday. I begin to hunger for the sea shore.

6. Rode to Squam with the Warners. Begin to be very apprehensive in regard to a doleful season ahead—both for the country and for individuals. The war is again adverse, and a long winter, after the drouth, will be a dreadful affair.

13. Settled on $140. damage with Captain Sanborn for burning Black Cat Island. Gave him $75. cash, and note for $76.85 due at Lake Bank, January 4, 1865. So much for one day's accidents.

17. Rainy day—Letter writing.

18. Sick with nervous complaint.

24. Mr. Reed arrives, full of the book on the Adirondacks we are to write together.

Just at this period, in a letter to his friend John J. Piatt, Stedman writes:

How, what, and where, are you? I have been here for several months, among the greenest shores, the most purple-golden mountains, and on the bluest waters, that you ever dreamed of. I have a sailboat, in which I fish and float from morn till dewy eve, a Summer's day. Would that you were with me in it. We'd sail

By wooded islands,
And rocky highlands,
And lovely by-lands
Where fairies dwell!

As it is, I have no decent fellow to be lazy with.

Health better. Think I have saved my life by this—the first vacation I have ever known. It was high time. Nervous complaint still bothers me, but I am brown and muscular. Write neither poetry nor letters.

So much for self. Now for you. We often think of you and yours and want to hear from you. After November 1st, if we are then housekeeping, you will know where to put up in the city. So Salmon's [Salmon P. Chase] gone out. Have you still friends at Court? How are Sarah and Marian? Our love to them. What doest thou in verse? How are Johnson, O'Connor, Blood, *et al?* I forget them not. . . .

To his Mother:

CENTRE HARBOR, August 26, 1864.

Your continued position with regard to our National cause pains us exceedingly. The only "ruin" that *we* see is in the timid and unheroic divisions of the North, which is too luxurious to accept the burdens of a noble struggle, and which *may* be deluded into an armistice at the very moment when its armies are gnawing at the vitals of the rebellion. The Chicago Democratic Convention is in league with the traitors, and the next three months will fully test the strength of the people's patriotism. If Mr. Lincoln is reëlected, on a war basis, the rebellion will yield, the Union be reëstablished and we shall still have a country. If the opposition succeeds, or if Lincoln is tempted into an armistice, the Union is lost, and we have no country. In such case, I for one, shall leave America so soon as my means will permit, and no longer claim American citizenship. Many others will do the same. The fact is that I cared little for my country until it was in trouble, but since then have begun to love it. God save its integrity! I believe He *will* do this, and more also.

But for three months I have been entirely out of the whirl of public affairs or private business. Have been a boy again, floating in my sailboat, the *Laura*, day after day, on this peerless, mountain-shadowed lake. Have read little, and purposely written nothing at all. It is my first rest for many years, but it comes too late. When out-of-doors from morning till night, I am well enough, but my cheeks and temples are still shrunken, and if ill-weather confines me for two days, at any time, I suffer enough to remind me that I am terribly mortal. But the Summer in the city would have killed me, and, on the whole, I go back next week (to furnish our new city house) with better health and spirits than in the Spring—and with so brown a skin that I can pass for a well man in society, a great desideratum. . . .

I expect to see Clem. when she is a saintly old maid, like the Bishop's sister in *Les Misérables*—after all her narrow matrimonial escapes. Fie, my pretty sister, you should have taken the French Count! Since you failed to marry for love in Italy—as you wished to—you must now marry for wisdom, and I again repeat that, in the Eyes of God and man, conventual asceticism is unnatural and ghastly in a fair young girl. Live simply, and be happy, like the birds and flowers (as I once have written), and God is the best pleased, just as I am happiest when *my* children are most natural and blithesome. Clementine is morbid, and you must check her. Of course you hope she will have strength to "resist temptation," for no woman wishes another—not even her own daughter—to get married, though she accepts it as a *necessity* in the maternal instance. I agree with Mr. Kinney, that Clementine should make a good and speedy match.

. . . .

Have been interested in reading sundry descriptions of life at Hombourg, in modern English novels. Literature is at a standstill in America—paralyzed by the War. All *other* arts and trades are thrifty.

The shooting of Stedman's chief, Samuel Hallett in Kansas City, made great changes in the firm of Samuel Hallett & Company. Upon Stedman's return to the city in September, 1864, he took his capital and opened a brokerage house of his own. At first intending only to deal in stocks for himself, he soon found himself in possession of a thriving commission business.

From the diary:

October 8, 1864. My thirty-first birthday. Since October 8, 1863, I have published my second volume, made $10,000., which came like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Have been able to obtain a few months' rest in the country, and compose my mind, and look before and after. Altogether, though suffering much from ill-health, and still feeling keenly Charley's loss, I have been wonderfully protected and sustained, and it has been the happiest year of my toilsome, turbulent manhood.

9. Letter from poor ——. *Mem.:* To send him $50. if I can spare it to-morrow.

10. A regular field-day in business downtown. Petroleum Board held first meeting. Bought *Life of Jean Paul.* Made $281. in Oil stock.

11. Committee meeting to organize Board and prepare Constitution.

12. Elected Secretary of the Petroleum Stock Exchange.

Called on Spaulding at *Times* office. Great political victory in Ohio, Indiana and Pennsylvania.

14. Worn down with too much business and office vexations. Have carefully read Frances Power Cobbe's book "Broken Lights." This earnest, unpretending volume sets forth more clearly what every intelligent modern thinker *feels*, than any religious work I have ever studied. There is hardly a word in it from which I can dissent.

22. To-day falls due my note for $1500. exchange for the same from ———, to accommodate him, he agreeing to protect and meet mine. Drawn at 6 months from April 20th, 1864 payable at Lawrence & Company's. Had to pay half of this—*always* the case when I endorse. Shall in time, I hope, be repaid.

23. At the close of a *hard* week's work, I at length begin to get things in order. House almost finished and looking sweet. Received letter from Case, enclosing a memento of my "early struggles."

24. Scraping with the muck-rake. Loaned Mr. James Spaulding $500. with pleasure.

26. Deposited $3000. U. S. 6s with First National Bank as collateral for overdrafts. Made a splendid day ($750.) on commissions and lost it all through my inattention to the general market.

28. Have made this week near $2000., on regular business and through want of time and overwork lost $1200. on stocks. To-night sleep our first night in our new house.

November 5. Invited to the 70th birthday festival of Bryant at the Century Club, but not able to attend.

6. Boker and Graham came over with invitation from Bancroft to evening at his house. Went over. Talked with Bryant, Street, Ripley, etc. After the affair, oysters and ale with Stoddard, Taylor, Boker, Graham.

7. Mr. Newbould commenced as my assistant to-day, and I now hope to be relieved from much care. Richard Grant White passed evening with me, and read Browning.

8. Stood two hours in the rain and voted for Old Abe. Realized on stocks and made $1375.

9. Yesterday a great triumph for the National cause. Thank God! The future of America is now secure.

10. Fall in Gold. I make on everything I manage myself and lose on the operations of my agents.

17. ——— being in trouble, have sent him all I could spare, $50. Would have done it earlier, if I had felt able.

18. Visited Launt Thompson's studio. Met Booth and Brady admiring his magnificent statue of Napoleon. Gave order to Hays for $50. picture—to Eastman Johnson for $200, *do*. Got acquainted with Hennessy, Homer, and Inness.

The remainder of the month, Stedman was occupied with plans for the "New York and Philadelphia Petroleum Company," filing its charter on December 2, and opening its books in both cities on December 7. The 9th of December, 1864, Stedman and Stoddard were elected members of the Century Club.

From the diary:

December 17. A classic evening at the Century Club with Taylor, Stoddard, Graham, Barstow, etc.

22. Hard at work all this week, and preparing for Christmas too. Shall send the tokens to the Stoddards I have been so long anxious to make, and mean they shall be of *real* value to them just now, when the War has borne so hard on all writers.

23. All night preparing Christmas tree—first time in our *own* home. Shall invite the Stoddards, Barstow, Robinson, Mrs. Pratt, Newbould's children, Ellis.

24. Splendid Christmas Eve. All the foregoing present and very happy, I think. E. D. B. S. and R. H. S. pleased with our gifts. The children uproarious. Dear ones, they are happier than I was when a child, thank Heaven. Received exquisite picture and vase from E. D. B. and R. H. S.—the latter with such a poem of his own as none but Catullus, Herrick, or Stoddard ever wrote. Sent Mr. Newbould articles of copartnership and received a kind and grateful letter in return. Got ———'s brother out of prison, for her and ———'s Christmas. Presents to all the aforenamed, and to Graham, C. B. H., Ella, and many others. A beautiful Christmas all around. If Charley was only alive, and with us! On Sunday [Christmas-day] a great display of gifts. In the P. M. we all went to the Stoddards and saw their table. In the evening to Bayard Taylor's and had supper till midnight with the Taylors, Grahams, Stoddards, etc., etc.

LAURA HYDE WOODWORTH STEDMAN IN 1864
From a photograph by Brady

27. Greatly troubled to find a good Transfer Clerk and dread a return to my business slavery. Engaged Mr. Denny as Transfer Clerk for this day.

31. The year has been pecuniarily my best one yet. It opened on me very poor. Am now in our own home, and with some little means. Am grateful that my dear ones will not be wholly *dependent*, if I should suddenly die. And if I am to live a little longer, I *may* be able to resume my art and studies. Barstow came in at midnight, and we saw the Old Year out.

The year 1865 began for Stedman with hard and anxious work in his business, which, under his guidance, grew rapidly, until he felt obliged to enlarge his office-force, and to select more partners from the number who were eager to join him. Often in the evenings he was to be found at the Century Club, where he met continually new and distinguished acquaintances, or chatted with old friends. As his finances prospered, it gratified him to furnish more completely, his house, which is remembered as "æsthetic and essentially homelike." It was a home more to his taste than any Stedman had occupied before. Although he had always bought what pictures and books his means allowed, he was now able to own many more.

In 1866, Colonel and Mrs. William C. Church came to live next door. Colonel Church had gone to the war, been wounded, won his commission, had returned, and was now the successful editor of the *Army and Navy Journal*, whose first issue appeared August 29, 1863. Colonel Church liked the new home of the Stedmans, and learning of an opportunity to buy a similar adjoining house, promptly became its owner. At a Memorial Meeting to Stedman, in 1909, referring to those days, Colonel Church said: "We formed two of a little clique, as you may call it, of men more or less interested in, or associated with, literature who were living in the block on the south side of Tenth Street running from opposite St. Mark's churchyard to Third Avenue. Next to my house was Mr. Stedman's, and just beyond him was Richard Grant White, and in the next house Mr. Armstrong, at that time a member of the Scribner firm. And there were others near by associated in congenial pursuits. So we formed what it is almost impossible to find in the New York of these days—a little neighborhood of friends of congenial associations in constant intercourse with one another." There was many a jolly gathering of these friends, to whom Stedman enjoyed sending little tokens of remembrance, taking infinite pains to carry out his ideas artistically. One night, for instance, receiving a box of lake trout from a comrade in Maine, he selected the finest, coiled the fish, putting the tail into its mouth, fastened it with a gay red rose, and despatched it to a member of the circle.

When Abby Woodworth, the lovely and intelligent younger sister of Mrs. Stedman, who had been in delicate health for some years, visited the Stedmans at Centre Harbor, in the summer of 1864, Stedman recognized her frail condition and insisted that she must spend the Winter of 1865 in their new home. It was a satisfaction to him to give the gentle girl, whose natural, artistic tastes and aspirations had been unfulfilled, an opportunity to enjoy some of these denied pleasures; while she in turn was able to repay her sister and brother by teaching little Fred, who was joined in his studies by Lilian, the only child of Bayard and Marie Taylor. In February, 1865, Abby, who had contracted a serious cold, grew suddenly worse; her mother and older sister Ella were telegraphed to come at once. An ice blockade prevented the steamer which was bringing these relatives, from reaching the wharf at New York. The poor sick girl sank rapidly, while praying to live until her dear ones should arrive. Stedman declared that she *should* live, and, by almost superhuman efforts, succeeded in reviving Abby, enabling her to greet with bright smiles her mother and sister when they at last reached her bedside; and he held her life until sunset of that day. Her sister says: "All that day Edmund devised ways to relieve, comfort, and cheer the dying girl. Standing at the foot of her bed, while friends were grouped about the still room, he talked with her tenderly of the beauty of the life to which she was passing, and at intervals, read to her from Mrs. Browning's 'He Giveth His Beloved Sleep.'

"Abby wished to say good-bye to the lads, little Fred and Arty, and they were brought to her. Although there was nothing of gloom in the scene, Fred was old enough to realize that it was *Death:* he wept bitterly, and begged to be taken away. But five years old Arthur, who saw only his dear Aunt Abby's beautiful, smiling face, as she told him of the delights of the 'Home' to which she was going, gladly climbed up beside her, nestling there, and laughing joyously as he heard about the happy little children she would soon find. With tears streaming, but smiling through them, at the beautiful picture, Edmund stood a little apart from the watching group. When the brave spirit was released, and the body was prepared for the last repose, it was thought best to take Abby to the parlor, on the floor below. Edmund would not allow the undertaker to perform that service: he took the slender body in his arms and tenderly carried her down the stairway to her waiting couch, where he laid her, adjusted her draperies, and gently folded the delicate hands over some roses upon her breast.

"When the watchers, worn with the day's sadness, had gone to bed, Edmund asked me to go with him to the library. For some minutes he sat at his writing-table motionless; then he began writing; finally he said: 'Ella, listen and tell me how this sounds to you,' and, with his voice faltering he read:

Could we but know
The land that ends our dark, uncertain travel,
Where lie those happier hills and meadows low,—
Ah, if beyond the spirit's inmost cavil,
Aught of that country could we surely know,
Who would not go?

"It was the first stanza of 'The Undiscovered Country.' Then he waited a little while, talking calmly of the day's experiences, of the possibilities of the 'Other Life,' which had seemed so real as my dying sister told us what she saw and heard there. Then Edmund wrote a part of the second verse, pondering somewhat upon certain forms of expression, and asked my judgment as to which one was the more truly expressive. At my protestations that *I* could not presume to suggest to *him*, Edmund answered: 'But you can *feel* what I do, Ella, you know what I wish to express.'"

Might we but hear
The hovering angels' high imagined chorus,
Or catch, betimes, with wakeful eyes and clear,
One radiant vista of the realm before us,—
With one rapt moment given to see and hear,
Ah, who would fear?

Were we quite sure
To find the peerless friend who left us lonely,
Or there, by some celestial stream as pure,
To gaze in eyes that here were lovelit only,—
This weary mortal coil, were we quite sure,
Who would endure?

Ah, how little did the young man then think that long years afterward, at his request, this poem would be sung at the funerals of his wife, his sons, and at his own. It was always one of his favorites: when it was set to exquisite music by Dudley Buck, its author begged that it might be sung to him, at every opportunity. Another poem suggested to him by the young girl's death was "The Assault by Night."

April 14, 1865, was the tragic day when President Lincoln was assassinated. A week later in writing to Bayard Taylor, Stedman makes these comments:

> I would that you were here to see this town, converted into a vast mausoleum by the national calamity. You know that a *vulgar* woman appears a lady *in mourning;* and that a lady is never so elegant as when in black. Something of the same effect has been produced on our superb, but bizarre and inharmonious, city.

It looks like an immense black and white flower, with leaves and petals spreading grandly and in perfect keeping, to every point of the compass. Such an effect I never saw, or dreamed of. It is overwhelming, sombre, sublime. Just the same feeling, of the spirit of which all this is the outward symbol, flows like a mighty river through the hearts of the million. It can never be changed, or lessened. The South has sinned the "unpardonable sin."— To me the history of the last four years seems as fateful and tragic as all the Greek Dramas rolled into one, and applied to nations instead of families. The "unities" of the terrible play have been faultessly preserved. It is as perfect in climax, as it is gigantic, and its effects on the future of human progress are palpable to all of us whose eyes were ever anointed to discern the right and the sure.

Captain Barstow has been somewhat stunned by these events, and wears a *cockade d'œuil* as large as a dahlia. Dick is writing an ode on the President! I told him that this punishment, or penace, was reserved to him by Fate. It opens very solemnly and finely, in the metre of the ode on "Cromwell's Return from Ireland"— a measure which Stoddard handles with peculiar effect.

. . . .

Mr. Greeley is disgusting everybody with his pardon-mania, and Gay, I am glad to say takes quite the opposite course.

When Stoddard completed his Ode, Stedman remarked: "I think his magnificent Monody or Horatian Ode unequalled by any previous American poem, and if it is not so deemed by the press and public, it will be a cruel renewal of the injustice which has been the lot of all young New York poets." Stedman's sonnet, "Abraham Lincoln," was published in the *Tribune* the morning before the day of the funeral.

On February 12, 1898, in response to the request of a friend, Stedman writes:

By a strange double coincidence—most certainly without prevision on my part—I have copied the Lincoln Sonnet for you at this Club [The Players] founded by the gentle, patriotic, eminent man of genius, Edwin Booth,—and from the volume of my early poems which he owned, and had preserved in his library; moreover, I have fulfilled your wish, it seems, upon the anniversary of the birth of the man whose martyrdom the sonnet denounced.

Having observed all this, I am somewhat awed and self-reproachful, as if I were disloyal to the manes of my dear friend. I never shall copy the sonnet again, and probably shall not retain it in future collections of my verse.

I hesitate as to sending it, though promised, even to you. Yet perhaps this is the occasion for putting on record that its outcry for the revenge which Bacon calls "a kind of wild Justice" was under the prevailing misconception that Southern policy brought about the assassination; also, that Edwin Booth (with whom I was of equal age), over whose after-life that tragedy imposed such a cloud of melancholy, comprehended all, and of his own volition, a year later, became my attached comrade—and loyal comrades we remained until his dying day.

This is not for publication, but I will not send you the autographic transcript, without saying this much as a comment "after thirty-three years."

Stedman's health again failing, he was forced in April, 1865, in order to seek rest in the country, to sell out his active share in his business. Of this he writes to his Mother:

I have not written you so often this year, as my feelings would have impelled, because the grasshopper has been not only a burden, but a fearful load. You know that Fate sometimes whirls a man along against his will. The Greeks understood it, as my Sophocles and Euripides tell me. In some such way I became entangled in business last Fall, against my refusals and protests. Intending merely to turn over my own little savings, and to have plenty of time for health and recreation, perhaps authorship, I found a crowd of people forcing me to accept their trusts—apparently not agreeing with your frequent assertion that I could never do business safely or successfully—and found that I had a commission house "in spite of myself." Well, I feel more anxious about other people's affairs than my own, and of course have worked like a slave all Winter, and made much less profits than if I had not started a *regular* business. The thing has grown so on me that I have been forced to take partner after partner, first surrendering one-quarter, then another, and another, of my earnings, from sheer sickness and inability to execute my own good thoughts. Have had severe pleurisy and cough, and at length have sold out my last interest in the concern for a trifle, to save my life. *My name*, from motives of policy, must stand as before, but on the 1st of January, 1866, my one-quarter profits cease. The house is splendidly established, and has a reputation of which I am justly proud. My partners will stay here and get *rich*. *Pour moi* it is the third time my brain has created a fortune for others, which my *body* has forced me to surrender for myself. But I shall not retire penniless, having perhaps enough to keep us from *want* again, though not half enough to live on. Thus you have the precise statement of my affairs which you desired. It is confidential. The Doctor says that I can never recover the health lost during these two New York winters, and sometimes I suffer so that I wish it was all over. Even my *pluck*, "the last—security—of noble minds" has almost given out. When *that* goes, a week will end it. These things a man does not care to parade before the world, so consider them the sobbings of a son to his mother and don't repeat them sorrowfully to any of my friends. If I *do* go, it will not be to distress you—as you seem to think—but because my lungs have given out. And if any Calvinist asks me on my death-bed if I am "willing," I shall answer, "most assuredly *not*. Every life closed before seventy is against the order of nature, and I have much left to do on earth." . . .

When I added a postscript to Laura's letter, we were rejoicing over successes; now the most sublime mourning the world ever saw is all around us. . . . But the law is maintained *more firmly than ever*, and the triumph of Democracy is complete in the grandeur of "no change" caused by the murder of the good President. The people are *great*. I wish you could be here to see and feel it.

The summer vacation of the Stedmans opened with a delightful visit to Mr. and Mrs. Bayard Taylor at their beautiful home "Cedarcroft," Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, where Stedman and Taylor enjoyed happy hours reading together and reciting poetry. The second day of June, the birthday of Mrs. Taylor, was celebrated by a *fête:* which happy occasion Mrs. Taylor relates in her volume, "On Two Continents":

The visit of the Stedmans, who brought their elder boy with them, was an event in our country life. Our friends came in the first days of June. The sky was a deep blue, and "Cedarcroft" was never more entrancing. . . .

This exquisite weather tempted us to go forth and spend the day beside the Brandywine Creek, where it winds its gentle course between woods and meadows six miles distant. We started in the morning, and took plenty of provisions for the day. No cloudlet flecked the pure azure of the sky, the warm air was laden with the aromatic breath of blossoming grasses, flowering shrubs, and the fresh foliage of the woods; all nature was in its most vivid and joyous mood. We camped merrily on the banks of the little stream, at a place where a rich green meadow stretches away for some distance, hemmed in on one side by a thickly-wooded ridge, on the other by a grove of mighty oaks. Here we unpacked the hampers and enjoyed ourselves. Stedman and Taylor waded barefoot through the cool ripples of the shallow stream, long staffs in their hands, while Laura Stedman and I, with the children, were weaving garlands of oak leaves and wild-flowers—when on a sudden a herd of upward of a hundred head of cattle appeared at the upper end of the meadow, apparently attracted by our presence. Slowly they approached, and drew up in line of battle, so that we began to question if it might not be best to seek safety in flight. But the animals also seemed to be deliberating. They halted, and then a reconnoitering party of about a dozen magnificent steers, fattened upon the richest meadow pasture, slowly advanced toward us. As they did not seem to have any hostile intentions, we quietly allowed them to come up. Taylor, following the sudden merry impulse of the moment, seized one of our wreaths and wound it around the horns of the largest steer; then he grasped a branch of oak and offered another to Stedman. The latter sprang upon the steer's back, while Taylor led it by the horns. Mrs. Stedman, I, and the children at once followed in single file, and our negro servant headed the procession, carrying the pail of milk punch. Thus we marched around in happy mood, like Arcadians of old, bringing an oblation to the god of joy.

The victory was assured, the cattle moved peacefully away, and we saw them no more. The poetic result of this beautiful day along the idyllic Brandywine is embodied in the sonnets published respectively in E. C. Stedman's and Bayard Taylor's collected poems.

By the middle of June, 1865, Stedman and his wife were located at the Heath House, Schooley's Mountain, New Jersey, thence he wrote the following letter to Bayard Taylor:

Here we are—Laura and I—1210 feet above our yesterday morning's breakfast-table in the city, and already boring each other to death, and longing for more society. Of course we are a fortnight ahead of the season here, and have this broad sierra-crest, these darkling groves, and this marvellously pure air, pretty much to ourselves. But the delightful ease, with which even my withered lungs can breathe here makes up for a host of wants—i. e., for the want of hosts such as we had at beautiful Cedarcroft. If our hosts would now only become our guests, and come up hither, we should be perfectly happy. Although I bid you come up into a mountain, I am not the Evil Tempter. You cannot see from hence all the kingdoms of the earth, nor do I bid you fall down and worship me. But you shall have long walks, springs, brook-trout, ten-pins, milk-punches—aye, in memory of the Brandywine meadows, and all this without sin. If you and Marie will come any time within a fortnight, you shall find us here.

You splendidly healthy fellows never realize that you are mortal, and the tools of the element. But one who, like myself, is an oxygen-drunkard learns to be humble. Monday I suffered so much in New York that I thought a week would end me; to-day on this mountain height, I breathe as freely, and am as strong, as "any other man."

We enjoyed ourselves completely at Cedarcroft, and daily recall those mornings and evenings which seemed each more delicious than its forerunner.

My letters, so promptly returned by you, reached me in Philadelphia. One of them detailed the efforts made by our friend to obtain and forward the birthday token for which we sent. He searched Philadelphia through for something neat, of the kind we ordered, and could not find it. So that belt was of

The gifts that were never given,
  The songs that were never sung,
The stars that are not in Heaven,
  The vows that found no tongue.

Returning to New York we found that Mrs. Stoddard had come down to visit Dick, and she is there now. We were too hurried to shew her much attention. Met Graham and told him all about you. Found nothing new in town, except that the Sweetzers have concluded to hitch horses, and have one good weekly in place of two poor ones. Godkin's *Nation* is soon to appear, and Will Dodge, who knows all about it, says it will be a success. *Mrs. Grundy* is also under way, with a purse of $100,000 and all the Bohemians are exultant.

Seeing these figures reminds me that we subscribed $1,500,000 to the new 7/30s, and astonished Wall Street, as per Jay Cooke's telegram enclosed. It may interest you, as you had confidential knowledge of our intent.

Fred and Arty have gone to Connecticut with their Aunt for the Summer.

I have one or two minor poems in hand, and plenty of ideas. You must finish *St. John* this season. I met Boker in Philadelphia on my return, and he said he thought it your best poem, so far as he had heard it. Therein I agreed with him. . . .

To the Same.

Cataract House, Niagara, July 16, 1865.

Day before yesterday, waiting in the Utica depot, (*en route* from Saratoga to Niagara via Newton Falls), we met that dear, good-hearted and sensible, Mrs. McEntee. Our talk at once turned upon you and yours, and you all came so warmly up into our hearts and mouths, that I vowed I would write you on Sunday. So here we are again, as the clown says in the circus. The utter loneliness of our mountain top became too sensible, and we passed through New York, reaching Saratoga in time to pass the Fourth there, and ten days more. Having always imagined that place a center of noise, fashion, heat, etc., we were pleasantly surprised to find ourselves beautifully fixed in nice rooms, with liberty to dress and act as we chose, and the loveliest walks, drives, etc., one could wish. The quiet seemed to enjoy themselves as well as the noisy. The waters agreed with me, and I improved there, at least, in strength. . . . While there, Walker (war painter), Davis (*Harper's Weekly*), Brady, myself, (*et alii iqnoti*) made up a stag party to Lake George. There we hired a large sail-boat of which I was made Captain, and I enforced strict obedience by fines of whiskey, cigars, etc. We went the length of the Lake, and were exposed two days and nights in an open boat, having a glorious time. I forgot my troubles, and was a boy again, getting better and browner hourly. A month of it would cure me.

Well, here we are, on our way to Sault Ste. Marie, for which we start tomorrow, and go, as it seems to a sick man, in his "moods," out of sight and sound of humanity. The thought is consonant to me, at present, yet would that you and Marie were with us. Man cannot live by bread alone; no, nor by woods and waters. Stoddard nearly came. I found that I had the means to pay *somebody's* fare, and urged it for his sake and mine. He looks miserably and wants such a release from imprisonment.[1] But he was compelled to say, No; could not spare the time from the publisher's work pressing on him. So I finally took my pet clerk, Willy Davis, from the office, and paid all his expenses, determined not to make the cruel blunder I made last year, of settling down in one place with no male companion. He will rough it with me, at all events, and help me, if I'm sick. Our headquarters will be at the Sault, but I shall explore the Lake, if able. All our letters to be sent to the care of Stedman, Ewell & Company, 57 Exchange Place, New York. I don't know when you'll hear from us again. Probably when we have a rainy day on the Lake, the writing feeling will revive.

You have one of your best articles in the *Atlantic*, and of that healthy natural kind which I so love to read. By your letter I see that you have as many plans for work as ever. And, by the way, my dear fellow, that's the thing I especially honor in you, viz. that while you enjoy *life* to the lees, having more companionship and genial pastime than any man I know, you still put your life-work and Art before all, and conscientiously and continuously perform it, never hasting, never resting. This is *character* and what every great Artist has displayed. Genius will work. I think that naturally something of this temperament falls to me, and that, were it not for the sorrowful sickness and weakness which has forbidden me to subject my dear ones to the perils of a

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[1] His labors are not great and many would envy his easy confinement. But remember that he is a *poet*, and utter *liberty* is the sole condition of a poet's, or a bird's, healthful existence. I have more than once, bartered a fortune and a name, for perfect freedom of thought, time, and body. *You* have only endured contracts *under motion*. [E. C. S.]

sick author's income, I might have perhaps displayed more of it—*Et Ego in Arcadia.* Perhaps there is a future life where one can make harmonious cadences, and whose rarer ether—but hold, I'm harping again on forbidden themes.

These Falls of Niagara improve on acquaintance, but still, I feel nothing of the *awe* in their presence which greater minds profess to have felt. The fact is one can pour over a so much loftier and louder-sounding torrent in his soul, that these seem rather lathery and tame. I catch myself wondering whether all these rascally hackmen and publicans, who talk so loudly of them, don't, in their heart of hearts, think them a humbug—a sort of springe to catch woodcocks. If this is the largest thing of the sort in the world, what a little Peddlington sort of a ball this world is, anyhow! Probably, though, I see them too late in life—(saw them some years ago, for an hour only). When quite young, the first sight of the ocean impressed me beyond measure. For years I dreamed of that white surf—the infinite laughters—the unended gloom behind. Even now I am lost, and *lifted*, by the sea-shore. There is nothing like it. Niagara is measurable. The roar of the cataract is that of a great mill-dam. But the ocean makes you *think* it has no limit. You can sail beyond the sunset. And what is the wonderful charm and meaning of its sound upon the beach? It seems to come from far away, and is full of "the melodies of many lands." Nothing can shake my first love. I shall flutter around its borders, like the moth around the candle, until it consumes me.

Here at Niagara the best thing in my mind is my mother's quatrain to the eagle—you might have written it—

> Where the great Cataract sends up to Heaven
> Its spraying incense of perpetual cloud,
> Thy wings in twain the sacred bow have riven,
> And onward sailed, *irreverently proud!*

There is a fine swoop and curve in that last line. We were greatly edified by your account of the Quaker, anti-Hannah Thurston events, and proud that you bearded the lion in his den, the Douglas in his hall. They'll send you to Congress from that district after a while. When you're up, I'll come down and stump for you, if you don't pay me something to keep away.

Tired as I am, if I had revised my poem—"The Mountain"—

I'd copy a portion of it for you. It is *good enough*, but has not been touched since the first draft. Would finish it up for the *Atlantic*, did I suppose they would take it from me. Some time I must get an introduction there, through a kind word from *you*. What bad poetry they occasionally print. You furnish, apparently, all their *good*.

. . . .

I saw the first number of *The Nation*. It was rather heavy. The illustrations to the first *Mrs. Grundy*, which also reached me, were good. Reading matter poor.

To his Mother.

Cataract House, Niagara, July 16, 1865.

Having surrendered the idea of wealth, the determination to do something great for myself and the world, I now wish to live till Freddy is old enough to make his own way. . . . But I dress nicely, go into the sunshine, get brown, and let the outside world know as little as possible of my inner life. And if I come to see you, I shall try to be happy, and impose as little as possible on you.

The Doctors say that if I hadn't discovered and understood my condition years ago, and fought against it, I should have died before Charley. So much for *Will*.

I have detailed this, not to annoy you, but to let you see that you had both much better, so long as God gives you rest and means, avoid extravagance of expression and thought, and look at the world as mirthfully, instead of as seriously, as possible. Write me agreeable, comical, playful, anything but *sentimental* letters. Let us all go to the Farce, not to the Tragedy. I am too familiar with the latter. . . .

We feel as if we were drifting out into the sunset, and away from humanity. The farther I go away, the less I care to come back, or to write anybody. . . .

I see by the papers that Dr. D. S. Dodge's family sailed for Europe on the same steamer with my friends Nicolay and Hay—Consul and Secretary, at Paris. Hay is a handsome young fellow, . . . He is bright, and a poet and essayist of talent. He was Mr. Lincoln's private Secretary

The whole country is at peace and happy. I certainly *do* believe in extreme punishment on Jeff. Davis, and so do all thinking men—though he will undoubtedly escape it. Not that I have the least desire for *vengeance* on the miserable, pitiful, broken-down traitor. You misunderstand me. But it is our sacred duty to make an example in this case, and the nation will commit a *crime* before God, if it indulges in weak deference to European opinion and lets him go. Treason here is different from *the fight of different factions* for a crown in Europe. It involves the stoppage, or success, of modern civilization. Treason is a crime against God here; against man, in France.

. . . .

I enclose a slip, to show you the honorable and large position of my house. Although obliged to leave, poor, I have the satisfaction of having, unaided, built up the most popular and successful young banking-house in New York, and having shown that poetry, if good, may not unfit a man for other work, if he chooses to do it. If I had *health* for five years, I would write two or three books, and open banking-houses in London and Paris, in connection with the New York house.

To Bayard Taylor.

Preston Ponds, Adirondack Wilderness.
August 19, 1865.

After catching twenty-two graceful and iris-tinted speckled trout this morning, before Laura was up, I came back to camp and breakfast, and opened my little Diary to see what day it was. Discovering that it is what my sometime interred Guardian used to call "the light of another holy Sabbath morning," I feel exultant at having disproved the adage that fishermen have the devil's luck o' Sundays. And having in vain waited since our arrival here for a rainy day—to give me a fair excuse for writing letters in the midst of such glorious woods and waters—I will beg off from further tramping this A. M., on the ground that it *is* Sunday, and will do up all my little batch of correspondence in a lot. And first a line to you, my dear boy, in return for your delicious letter and poem of the 19th July—though I can send you no such verses, even if I could write them, "which it is not" the case. Leading my present life, though I enjoy the poetry of others, (especially when filled, like "The Sleeper," with the breath of Summer, and the wise peace and kindliness of her wildwood haunts) as never before, the idea of writing—of making any poetry myself, never occurs to me. I am too fully in harmony with these surroundings to strike single chords of my own. What the future may accomplish in me I neither know nor care. My duty and joy in the present is to *grow*, not to produce. And at last I *am* growing in health, and I trust strength, of body and mind. If it will only last! For a fortnight I have been full of physical joy—and almost wish that we could stay here forever. The spirit and intent of your poem I appreciate thoroughly. Who can worry over the enmities of short-lived *individuals*—who can remember the "fever and the fret," while face to face with eternal, dispassionate, all-loving nature, in her most endearing moods? And that you know how to paint the great Mother, in every one of her phases, I will defend against a critical world in arms. And so a thousand thanks for your thoughtful kindness in copying such a poem and sending it to me fresh "with shadow, coolness and the rush of streams."

Your letter reached me just as we were leaving the Sault Ste. Marie. The air was a little too strong there, and the immense, sprawling West fatigued me. I found no pleasant friends to camp with. For these and other reasons, I yielded to one of my *decisive* impulses and started for the Adirondacks, taking Toronto, the St. Lawrence, and Montreal by the way and telegraphing to have our mails sent to Crown Point, Lake Champlain. Thence we came in to the heart of the Wilderness—feeling safe and homelike among these embosoming hills, and on these waters tinct with blues not so unfamiliar or unloving as those of the far North Western sky. Ever since we came in my health has steadily improved, and I feel enough confidence in your affection to believe that this is the best news which I—so utterly away from the rush of outside facts—can write you. We stayed a week or more at houses along the route; but at last, with Max Tredo, Deerslayer, etc., for a guide, plunged into the heart of the Wilderness, and have been camping in a log and bark hut, on these obscure lakes, miles away from any living person, since the eleventh instant. Our hut faces a huge rock, where we build a fire ten feet long o'nights, and has a Summer booth at its back, where we shade ourselves o'days and look at the lake. O, how you and Marie would love to be with us, and how often we talk of you both affectionately around our camp fire. We killed a buck the second night we came, and have been living daily on some such bills of fare as this:

Breakfast

Broiled Venison and Currant Jelly
Trout fried in butter
Bread, Butter, Fried Potatoes, etc.
Coffee.

Dinner

Roast Venison or Venison Stew
Boiled Trout, Potatoes
Raw Onions, Chow Chow
Rice Pudding
Coffee.

Tea

Broiled Trout, Flap-jacks, Tea.

Supper

Arrack Punch, or Whiskey and Segars, around the huge fire

At night we all turn into our blankets, and sleep soundly. Our living is really delicious, and the cookery splendid. Such venison I never ate before. Doesn't your mouth water? Then we are surrounded by the most exquisite string of little lakes, full of speckled trout. For the rest, we look rough enough, belonging to the tribe of *Ashantee*. Laura is so black that I call her Squawrina. . . .

With the close of September, 1865, Stedman felt the necessity of resuming management of his business affairs. "I dread, dread, *dread* to return to the city. *There* is the great whirlpool to suck a fellow in and end him." Again, he says: "I am only civilized by the grace (or curse) of God and circumstance. . . . Taylor writes that he doesn't see how I can restrain from authorship and expression. If he had suffocated and choked as many years as I have, in the effort to follow art and live among brains, *he* would be disposed to set *physical harmony* above other life conditions. Thoreau was consumptive and every year I understand more and more his entire satisfaction with wild-life."

There was, however, a pleasant reason for Stedman's return to town fastnesses: after "long years" his mother and sister were arriving to make their home in New York, and this event made Stedman feel that if his health could be assured, nothing would stand between him and happiness.

November 13, 1865, at the burial of young George Arnold, at Greenwood Cemetery, Stedman was one of the little group, who

Stood around the dreamless form
  Whose strength was so untimely shaken,
Whose sleep not all our love could warm,
  Nor any dearest voice awaken;

And while the Autumn breathed her sighs,
  And dropped a thousand leafy glories,
And all the pathways, and the skies,
  Were mindful of his songs and stories,

Nor failed to wear the mingled hues
  He loved, and knew so well to render,
But wooed—alas, in vain!—their Muse
  For one more tuneful lay and tender,

We paused awhile,—the gathered few
  Who came, in longing, not in duty,—
With eyes that full of weeping grew,
  To look their last upon his beauty.

. . . .

And so we turned ourselves away,
  By earth and air and water chidden,
And left him with them, where he lay,
  A sharer of their secret hidden.

And each the staff and shell again
  Took up, and marched with memories haunted;
But henceforth, in our pilgrim-strain,
  We'll miss a voice that sweetly chaunted!

These lines, and more, Stedman wrote that night upon his return from the pathetic occasion: they were published in the *Round Table*.

With the first of December, 1865, he again accepted the Presidency of the New York & Philadelphia Petroleum

Company, thinking that it might save his finances, and that he might "resuscitate the stock by infusing a soul under the ribs of death."

On the last day of the year, as had been planned, the firm of Stedman, Ewell & Company was dissolved by its own limitations: J. N. Ewell and Charles E. Clarke, Jr., succeeding to the business. Stedman joyous of his release from active banking affairs, though retaining a silent interest and certain stocks of his own, hopefully turned to literature, determined to wrest some years for the work he felt was his vocation, and to conquer his ill-health, when, he said, "the rest is easy enough."

CHAPTER XIII

THE SICILIAN IDYLLISTS

A PLEASANT incident of Stedman's new-found freedom was a little dinner which he gave to W. D. Howells, then just returned from his Consulship at Venice. The group which Stedman invited to welcome this friend included the Stoddards, the Barstows, and the Taylors. The host's diary reads: "Howells is writing finely for the *North American Review*, *Nation*, etc., having matured his mind and body abroad, and now jumping into a deserved foremost position at a bound. *Our most rising young poet and essayist.*"

In 1910, recalling that long ago evening, Mr. Howells said:

> We had some gay talk and some gloomy talk, too, because Stedman didn't expect to live, he thought he was going into consumption. He hoped he would be able to finish his translation of Theocritus, on which his heart was set. After dinner we walked up Fourth Avenue . . . and spoke of poetry and literature, especially of the objective and subjective writers,—objective and subjective being the analogues of idealistic and realistic of our day,—and we referred to Dante as being always subjective. I said I had the impression that Stedman was subjective, and he said, "No, he always tended to the objective." . . . We were all more or less tarred with the Tennyson stick; but Tennyson went more deeply into Stedman, who was more of a poet than I was. We had certain favorites in common. There was no question about Keats, but I think he cared more about Shelley than I did. He and Stoddard were interested in Swinburne; I was not. But I know Stoddard and Stedman were very much taken with him. He appealed to Stedman on the scholarly side, because he was a great Grecian. Longfellow we valued in common, and the English group. . . . Stedman's ambitions were purely poetical. He felt that, if he were anything at all, he was a poet. He was a

writer of beautiful prose and a judicious critic, but he valued himself chiefly as a poet. His definite object in regard to his poetry was to create beauty. I think he was a man of generous sympathies for all that was wronged and all that was suffering, but he was intensely and strictly—much more strictly than I was—æsthetical. He was an artist, and that came first; the ethical side came afterwards. He was anti-slavery and his sympathies were with all people who worked too hard and got too little for it. His life was in literature and in poetry above everything else. . . . In 1866, he was more strictly æsthetical, more strictly artistic. I knew later how much he did for other people. He was most generous and was always doing something for somebody. He was always enthusiastic, and where he liked he liked very much.

I remember seeing Stedman and Edwin Booth together at James Lorimer Graham's, on the night when Booth picked up the hand of Lincoln and insisted on knowing whose it was. Stoddard and his wife were present, and Bayard Taylor. A very interesting man named Huntington—a brother of the painter Huntington—was also there. Graham's house was a very hospitable home, and he was enthusiastic about literature and young literary men!

On the night of that dinner-party, January 4, 1866, Taylor proposed to establish for Stedman a connection with the *Atlantic*. Several days later, its editor, Mr. James T. Fields, requested Stedman to prepare an article on Edwin Booth, which assignment Stedman at first felt modest about accepting, as there were others who had made the drama a specialty. He offered Mr. Fields instead a poem "The Mountain," saying, "at the suggestion of Mr. Taylor, I enclose for your acceptance or rejection a revised copy of a poem, of which he says he read the unfinished draft. Having had considerable editorial experience, I know how editors are embarrassed by the pre-judgments of 'mutual friends,' and therefore hope you will put Bayard's existence entirely out of the question, and send the *Ms.* back, if it is not *suited to the wants of your magazine.*" Presumably, the poem was suited to the magazine's wants for Mr. Fields accepted it, at the same time overcoming Stedman's reluctance to write the essay upon the art of "Nature's sweet interpreter,—

Edwin Booth." This little essay, the author says, "began my acquaintance with Booth, and was also my first article in the *Atlantic Monthly*." Stedman was soon actively at work on short poems, sundry articles, reviews, a complete and literal translation of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus, and a piece of criticism—the late English Poets. "I have been leading my beau-ideal life, for the first time in years," he tells his mother, "*writing from breakfast to lunch* in my library; lunch at home; then down town leisurely for exercise and business. To be sure, I am getting as poor as Poverty, but the Lord never intended that I should, at any one time, have health and money both. You cannot imagine with what zest I have gone back to my books! I did not know there was so much of the old love left in me. It seems as if I never wanted to leave my library, and as if my business life were a dream."

To James Russell Lowell.

NEW YORK, February 2, 1866.

Ever since the Spring of 1864, I have been trying to make an opportunity to thank you frankly for a discriminating and cordial notice, which appeared in the *North American*, and which I attributed to your head, heart and hand. If weak lungs—which, perhaps in my case, are not, associated with morbid thought, or selfish forgetfulness of such kindness—had not kept me from my natal East, I should have ere this braved the *Euroclydôn*, and have thanked you face to face. Let me now do so, heartily, before reaching the business portion of this letter. You did ample justice to all that was good in "Alice of Monmouth." Nor could I ask anything more from your scholarly regard, unless it were that you would, sometime, glance at a piece called *Alectryôn*, which received from me more affectionate care than did the war-story that gave the book its name—and which, of course, I should be glad to know had private audience of you.

My present object is to say that I have an article in hand, ordered for a weekly critical paper, which has so interested me that I have insensibly expanded its proportions and cared for its style, until it seems not only too long, but too good, for the journal in question. (Not that a man may ever do slovenly work; but there are many gradations above Zero.) And so, if you think its subject and aim suitable to the purposes of the *North American*, I will revise it carefully, and send it for your editorial consideration. It is entitled "English Poetry of the Period," and is *based upon* Mr. Stoddard's volume—"The Late English Poets," and Schöll's *Histoire de la Littêrature Grecque Profane.* The latter is used for its account of the Alexandrine age of Greek literature, when the poets of the day resorted to all sorts of quaint, involved, spasmodic devices, to cover defective creative faculty, but when criticism, philology, and general learning, were widely mastered. In my essay I draw an analogy between this and the modern English period; and have tried, while doing justice to the subtle versatility of the present school, to shew some of its defects and mannerisms, and especially its lack of *freshness*, and of buoyant faith and promise. The article, completed, will make not over fifteen pages of the *N. A.*, and I have thought that you would have a certain sympathy with its method and intention.

As to my prose writing—why, ill-health, which drove me from my profession to business, has, by a wilful paradox, driven me back to journalism again, and I am writing for our leading magazines, etc., and beg to enclose you an article from this week's *Round Table.* The subject is one which I tried to avoid, but, having it assigned me, tried to give it conscientious treatment.

I need not say how much the best readers in New York have been interested in the new series of the *North American Review.* We all feel like the audience of an Opera when the gas is suddenly "turned up." Among the papers which have attracted special attention here were, the very just measure of Miss Prescott's periphery, and the admirable analysis of Thoreau.

In New York quite a literary revival has followed the happy close of the war—you know we have *The Nation*, and *The Round Table*, such as they are—well written-for, and poorly edited. Then we are to have at least two new Magazines, this Spring, of a respectful cast, and perhaps *three.* But I fear that, as usual here, our publishers and writers will so *divide* their energies that we shall have three tolerable affairs, instead of one first-rate and standard.

From James Russell Lowell.

ELMWOOD, February 12, 1866.

I think one of the greatest pleasures is to come across a poem that one can honestly like; it's like finding a new flower. If, at the same time, one can please the author by telling him so, all the better. I liked "Alice of Monmouth," and felt bound to say so. I am glad to find that what I said did not mislike you—for I believe I have earned in some quarters a somewhat cynical reputation, because I have always insisted on reducing our criticism to a specie standard. If I don't like a thing and there's otherwise no harm in it, I hold my tongue. It's so hard to say anything that will not seem cold to a young author or a young mother! Does not the latter (for I will avoid kittle ice) think she has (*know* she has,) brought into the world a new wonder for beauty, genius, goodness? Is not all about it miraculous? However, *your* baby is now some three years old; and, since you ask me, I will answer frankly that I did not like Alektryôn, and don't think him at all to be compared to his sister Alice—a strutting fellow that wants to make me believe he can crow in ancient Greek. Alice is Christian, modern, American, and that's why I like her. I don't believe in these modern antiques—no, not in Landor, not in Swinburne, not in any of 'em. They are all wrong. It's like writing Latin verses—the material you work in is dead. It's the difference between Chaucer and Gower. You see what I mean—or, at any rate, that I have a meaning, which is the main thing. It is like these everlasting Venuses our sculptors give us. They thrust the right foot forth a little and call it a "Greek Slave"; the left, and lo, a "White Captive"! Well, well, I won't bore you with a sermon; but you asked me, and so I answered. If I did not think you had better things in you I should have evaded with a civil bow.

And now for business. I have no doubt, from the hints you give me of your purpose, that I shall like your paper for the *North American Review*. The one you sent me in print I liked. We do not ask that our contributors should always agree with *us*—except in politics; of course *there* the *Review* must be consistent. But otherwise—anybody who has *ideas* is thrice welcome. The April number is already full, but the sooner you send it the better.

I shall be in New York next week if nothing happens, and shall hope to see you there. If ever you come this way, I shall count on your coming out to my Doubting Castle here among the elms.

At a luncheon at the Taylors the following week, Stedman met Professor and Mrs. Lowell, who a few days later passed an hour at the Stedman home. Stedman was always "particularly grateful" for the cordial appreciation of his early poetry, and for the friendship, which Mr. Lowell gave to him, as a young man. At Mr. Lowell's death, recalling this first visit, the younger poet said:

> Lowell looked me up of his own accord. He found me at my modest house, and at once made himself at home and me at my ease.
>
> I brought out a bottle of wine, and he asked, "Haven't you some whiskey?" "To be sure," I replied, "but"—
>
> "I prefer the American drink on this occasion," he said.
>
> I produced some cigars. "Haven't you any pipes and tobacco?" he asked.
>
> "Yes," I answered. "I am too poor to smoke cigars, as a regular thing, but I always keep some for my friends."
>
> "We had better stick to the pipes," he said, and he asked me if I had ever weighed a pound of smoking tobacco against a pound of cigars—their difference in cost and the amount of enjoyment they gave respectively. We had a most delightful evening, and it was the beginning of a never-interrupted friendship.

Mr. Lowell's early letters to Stedman made so profound an impression upon the junior that he often found himself repeating sentences from them. Twenty-three years later, he wrote:

> Now, the best poem (from the objective and artistic point of view) in one of my own books was the *Alectryôn*—a poem also in blank-verse, and also on a classic theme. When Mr. Lowell praised the volume in the *North American Review*, I was chargrined that he did not allude to my *pièce de résistance*, and finally hinted as much to him. He at once said that it was my "best piece of work," but no "addition to poetic literature," since we already have enough masterpieces of that kind—from Landor's *Hamadryad* and Tennyson's *Œnone* down to the latest effort by Swinburne or Mr. Fields. So I have never since written upon an antique theme. Upon reflection, I thought Lowell right. A new land calls for new song.

Several weeks after that first eventful evening, Stedman, learning that matters involving the interests of himself and others with the Petroleum Oil Company were being neglected at the oil districts, went to Pennsylvania to remedy the trouble. He found that the Superintendent had performed "a sad work," but it was characteristic of Stedman to forget his own losses in his resolve "to save" this man, who, despite his wilful mismanagement and dissipated habbits, had "generous traits and brains." Home again, he sent his completed article to Mr. Lowell with this letter:

New York, March 29, 1866.

Here is the review of late English poetry, and I know you should have had it ten days ago. As it is, I recopied all these pages in "the worst inn's worst room" of a shantyfied oil-town on the Allegheny river—and I dare assert that such a length of erudition will never again be spun within that same Shebang.[1] If it pleases you I shall be more than rewarded for the pains I have really taken with the article. A definite meaning and purpose, at least, run through it, and I have tried to avoid the Frenchman's error of making the facts square with the theories.

Perhaps the opening sentence is in bad taste: if it so appears to you, kindly decide the question for me, by drawing your pen through the words contained between the blue pencil-marks. If the title does not suit you, "Late English Poets" might do as well, though I like it as it stands.

If the entire article should be inconsistent with the views and standard of the *North American*, I assure you that you can safely say as much to me in the plainest words.

Have you read Professor Arnold's Monody on Clough? In these days such a poem is an event.

To Bayard Taylor.

New York, April 18, 1866.

Your welcome letter came in yesterday just as we were saying "We wish Bayard and Marie were here!" Mrs. Stoddard goes to Mattapoisett to-day, and yesterday P. M. she and Dick took her farewell dinner with us, "accordin'." We had celery soup, shad and water cresses, sweetbreads, peas and potato-balls, and dessert. But *all four* agreed that our dinner was not complete without your presence, and we were all merry at hearing from you with your wood-flowers and things. I am delighted that there is one man in the world so happy and fortunate as yourself and that he is also one who deserves to be. The fitness of things certainly has not been so manifested in my case, but I firmly hold that

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[1] *Anglice*—"A low place of entertainment for man and beast." [E. C. S.]

> A little light from darkness won
> It may be, even, to know the sun
> Hath other lands he shines upon—

And though I just now must confess that I don't see my way clear, I have faith that, like Mary Potter's duty, "It will be made manifest when the occasion comes."

If the Kennett people did not buy your book they would be blind, deaf and dumb, for it has apotheosized their whole region—celestialized it, I should say—as effectually as St. Pierre enhaloed the Isle of Mauritius, or Kingsley the Meadows of Devon. You have greatly bettered, to my mind, the stanza of "St. John" quoted in your letter. I shall pleasantly expect the proof-sheets and take them with me wherever I may wander this Summer. Henry Newton has sold his interest to Charles, who will henceforth run the *Round Table* alone, unless he finds a suitable partner.

I was offered a *large* salary to edit my brother's *Newark Daily*, and should have taken it, did I not know by sad experience that the Newark Summer fogs and heat are more than I can stand. No use to put yourself in a false position. There is a terribly shiftless poem by me in the last *R. T.*[1]—but I don't think it is meretricious, or wicked, as the women claim. Bromley, of Norwich, wrote me that it should be called "The Silk and Linen *W——'s* Soliloquy."

The *Tribune* dinner went off well, in some respects. You did excellently what you had to do, and made a fine hit with your *Frater Conscriptus ad* Ripley. Curtis, Ripley, and Richardson also made admirable speeches. You are quite *wrong* in attempting to commend my unpremeditated harangue. It was late, the seats were empty; I bungled throughout, and was throughly conscious thereof. But I have lived long enough to know that such things, good or bad, are remembered by the speaker much longer than by his hearers.

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[1] "Anonyma."

By Jove! I envy you in your delicious Spring wheat. Go in and win, this Summer. Let your poems be as plenty and as golden as your melons, and your fancies—may they cluster like your Catawbas and Delawares! *What* a place to translate Theocritus in! "The very word is like a knell, to win me back from thee to my sole self." . . .

From James Russell Lowell.

ELMWOOD, May 15, 1866.

Pray forgive me a neglect which was hardly my fault. Your article was brought to me with several other matters from the post while I was in the midst of a business which must be done with before a fixed day. They were all laid upon my desk, got shuffled up with an already frightful heap, and when I had done my work I forgot all about them—not knowing that your paper was among them. Your note gave me a shiver. I hunted over my papers, found the article, read it, liked it, and shall print it with great pleasure. I agree with your general view and with most of the individual criticisms so far as I know anything about the writers. I found some names I had never heard of before—which told me I was growing old—for I used to keep pretty well *au courant*. I shall take the liberty to make a verbal change here and there, such as I am sure you would agree to could we talk the matter over. I think, for example, you speak rather too well of young Lytton, whom I regard both as an imposter and an antinomian heretic. Swinburne I must modify a little, as you will see, to make the *Review* consistent with itself. But you need not be afraid of not knowing your own child again.

How comes on the "Theocritus"? I feel greatly interested in your success. I know of no English translation that is good for anything—indeed, I have only a faint recollection that I ever saw one. I *seem* to remember (as we Yankees say) a version of Elizabeth's time from which I have somewhere read extracts. The work appears to me not only a thing eminently fit to be done, but one by which solid reputation may be made. It is a rare opportunity, and particularly suited to a treatment in English hexameters. Pray don't neglect it, and don't hurry it. As one who has a sincere interest in you, will you pardon my saying that

I fear you *improvise* a little too much? I have a fancy that long brooding is the only thing that will assure us whether our eggs are chalk or have a winged life hidden in them. I know very well the exigencies of authorship—*haud inexpertus loquor*—and that's the reason I hold up a warning finger.

I see you have been writing a naughty poem called "Anonyma." The poem itself I have not seen. I own I am a little afraid of the demi-monde, for 'tis the side where the devil always has us at an advantage. One thing I especially liked in your "Alice" was its *tendency*. Don't direct your next letter to the Rev. Mr. L. You see a main part of my duty for some years past has been preaching to ingenuous youth, and I fall naturally into it.

To James Russell Lowell.

New York, May 24, 1866.

By a memorandum on my table, I see that I forgot to insert the words *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* in the portion of my article devoted to Mr. Clough—postponing their insertion until I could be sure of the spelling and then forgetting it altogether. Unless the proof should be sent to me, will you have them written in?

Any modifications you have made will be more than acceptable to me. It would be strange if, in going over so much ground—so many bardlings—I should not have said very many things which would require my own or another's amendment; and, indeed, such a field could not be surveyed at all unless the engineer was thoroughly fixed in certain principles of mensuration.

Let me here give you, my dear Mr. Lowell, a thousand *hearty thanks* for the genial and unexpected interest which you take in my work and intentions. In this age when everybody is so much at work, and so accomplished, I certainly have no right to hope, even from the comity of authors, that one in your position and under your constant obligations, can pause from worthier pursuits, to regard and encourage mine. I do not say this with the slightest affectation, but feel it thoroughly. Your advice and friendship are naturally more to one of my habits than could be those of any other American, and I do not hesitate to believe that I am truly grateful for the one and honored by the other.

You are right about "Anonyma," and Mr. [R. G.] White, though generous, is partially wrong. Its subject was not pleasing, nor did it fall within my own limits of "aristocracy in art." But it was simply intended as a dramatic sketch, and had been on hand, unused, for months, when a pressing weekly engagement induced me to give it out.

I *mean* to finish everything carefully; yet sometimes an author is obliged, you know, to keep himself somewhat in sympathy with the people by an "occasional" piece. Sometimes, too, he is so impressed by a dramatic fancy as to be compelled to write it out. This was the case with the ballad I sent you—"Spoken at Sea." It was improvised, but necessarily so, and, after all, made a very popular poem.

Is it not time that T. & F. got out the Biglow volume? They announce all their books, lately, so far ahead, that we become impatient at their non-appearances.

This afternoon I am going to take my pole and go a-fishing, alone [1] to a brook which has been waiting for me a fortnight—on the off-side of Schooley's Mountain—and whose trout would have charms for even the author of a Moosehead Journal.

Mr. Stedman's poem "Anonyma," which evoked varied criticism, contained such dramatic lines of portraiture as these:

If I had been reared as others have,—
  With but a tithe of these looks, which came
From my reckless mother, now in her grave,
  And the father who grudged me even his name,—
Why, I should have station and tender care,
  Should ruin men in the high-bred way,
Passionless, smiling at their despair,
  And marrying where my vantage lay.

. . . .

True, there are weary, weary days
  In the great hotel where I make my lair,
Where I meet the men with their brutal praise,
  Or answer the women, stare for stare.
'T is an even fight, and I'll carry it through,—
  Pit them against me, great and small:

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[1] Alone, because *none* of my book-friends here seem to care for anything but ink and paper. What would they have done in the heroic ages? [E. C. S.]

I grant no quarter, nor would I sue
For grace to the softest of them all.

. . . .

Fools! what is it that drives them on
With their perjured lips on poison fed;
Vain of themselves, and cruel as stone,
How should they be so cheaply led?
Surely they know me as I am,—
Only a cuckoo, at the best,
Watching, careless of hate and shame,
To crouch myself in another's nest.

But the women,—how they flutter and flout,
The stupid, terribly virtuous wives,
If I but chance to move about
Or enter within their bustling hives!
Buz! buz! in the scandalous gatherings,
When a strange queen lights amid their throng,
And their tongues have a thousand angry stings
To send her travelling, right or wrong.

Well, the earth is wide and open to all,
And money and men are everywhere,
And, as I roam, 't will ill befall
If I do not gain my lawful share:
One drops off, but another will come
With as light a head and heavy a purse;
So long as I have the world for a home,
I'll take my fortune, better or worse!

Of this poem, Howells wrote to Stedman: "I have lately seen two or three of your things that pleased me: 'Anonyma,' for one, was artistically and effectively done. I was amused to find it pitched into for immorality, for I thought it conveyed the gravest moral." Comments, made in the *Albion* upon "Anonyma," brought this letter from Stedman to its editor:

In no instance have I imposed upon the press a reply to criticisms of the literary character of my writings. An author offers his work to public enjoyment or disapproval. But when strictures are made upon his moral intent, he ought to cleanse it from blemish, if he has the "mind conscious of right." Suffer me, therefore, to protest, from a wounded spirit, against the injustice of your severe comments upon the poem " Anonyma "—and upon myself, its unfortunate author.

Knowing my repeated obligations to the *Albion* for scholarly and appreciative encouragement, I am sure that this injustice arises solely from a misconception of the purpose of the verses under review.

Let me briefly aver that I had not the least idea of "apologizing," in any measure, for the career of a courtezan; nor of pleading "for leniency of sentiment towards 'Anonyma,' on the ground that she was unfortunate in her parentage." Neither do I at all sympathize with her assumption that "a rich man's girl must needs be a heartless and mercenary schemer."

A good mode of criticism is that which has so often dignified your columns, viz., to judge a work of art as a whole, sympathetically, rather than by analysis of any special part. The three stanzas quoted in your article, together with the remaining five, were intended to convey a very different meaning from that which you impute to them.

My precise object, in the entire poem, was to give a faithful dramatic sketch of "Anonyma's" life and notions, (set forth in her own soliloquy), in all their selfishness, impudence, and repulsive vice. You have her own words, uttered from her own sophistical stand-point. I meant that they should define the method of the dangerous adventuresses, who of late swarm in America, as always in Europe, preying upon the society of our hotels and summer-resorts, and sometimes, under false guises, obtaining brief admission to the circles of domestic life.

You will perhaps bear witness that my published volumes have been free from sickly sentimentalism, and that I have always tried to shun obscurity of thought and expression. Probably, this endeavor has failed in "Anonyma," since your earnest, and evidently sincere, remarks so entirely misconstrue its intention.

So much for the *morale* of the poem. As to the purpose in art to be served, I will acknowledge that the law of aristocracy-in-taste impells me to more attractive themes. But sometimes one is so strongly impressed by an object frequently met with, as to portray it for the portrayal's sake. Otherwise, many of the most life-like, yet repulsive, characters of Thackeray, Fielding, Browning, Dickens, and of even greater masters, would never have been drawn.

Attribute this letter solely to my aversion to the mawkish, superficial motives which you justly condemn. If your condemnation, as falling upon me, has been observed by other journals, I trust they will do me the justice to reprint my defense.

The "literary revival" of which Stedman had written to Lowell was an important crisis in the power of the pen in New York. Two years earlier, Henry A. Blood in writing to Stedman had said: "I saw your masterly review of Bryant. What glorious broadsides you let fly at the dissecting-room poets. I laughed to split: but ——— thought both you and I were impious. He pins himself to Lowell's coat-tails, *in a manner!* 'Adsum' was a delicious poem. Who wrote it? The *Chronicle* had it to-day, but as usual made blunders. Homer was changed into Honor. The *Round Table must* not go down. For God's sake, if Boston can support a literary journal cannot New York? Your wealthy men must be made to feel that the literary honor of the great city is at stake and if she (the *Round Table*) totters prop her good legs."

The *Round Table*, though suspended from July, 1864, to September, 1865, did not "go down" until July 3, 1869. In the spring of 1866 another magazine was well under sail, in whose valiant course Stedman was enthusiastically interested, desiring, as his letters show, to aid his friends, the editors, who, he says, "are doing their bravest to establish a New York magazine, and ought to be helped and encouraged by New York authors." The magazine was the *Galaxy;* its initial appearance was on May 1, 1866. This "Illustrated Magazine of Entertaining Reading" was edited and published by Colonel William Conant Church, and his brother Francis P. Church.

By June, 1866, Stedman was greatly disheartened in his hope for strength and the leisure to write. Under the strain of reading and writing, his burden of ill-health, which he had been withstanding for several months, clamped decisively upon him. Also his business affairs, confided to others in order that he might gain the time to write, were in a distressing state. Gradually, through mismanagement, his capital was being swept away. As neither his health, nor the high standard of his Muse, would permit him to earn enough by his literary work to support his family, he was once again sharply confronted by the problem of existence. Although his unflinching will scorned a withdrawal from the immediate contest, the wisest means to reach his end appeared to be to seek recuperation in the country. Therefore, by the middle of June, the Stedmans went to Lake George: in their absence the home on Tenth Street was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Stoddard. Shortly after the arrival at Lake George, Stedman, responding in his mercurial temperament to the briefest respite, wrote to Mr. Stoddard, revealing his indomitable determination to thwart his demon of ill-health, and to seize every chance that it granted him for work:

To you and all with you at 184 East 10th, Greeting: Grace, Mercy and Peace, from those who inhabit the Happy Island of Avalon (where just now falls considerable rain and blows the North wind wildly,) in the bosom of the Enchanted Lake. We arrived here safely last Wednesday, and are the only tenants of this hostelry, save a young married couple, passing their honeymoon, who row off every morning to one of these fir-covered islands, and come back to dinner with black rings around their eyes. We have a bounteous table—new milk and butter—but for meat depend mostly on these noble lake-trout (*Salmo Adirondakus*) which I make bold to catch before breakfast, daily. Yesterday I killed a rattlesnake, ten years old, on the sunny ledge of an island—and will bring you his ten rattles. They grow around here: are not large, but spiteful. None on 14-mile-island. Never saw the woods so darkly green, and the waters so deeply blue. Sleep a great deal: the attractions are toward somnolence: and am growing brown and strong—and probably unfitting myself for city-work.

The fact is, Dick, that it is hard to reconcile myself to the doubtful future close at hand, and I put off the struggle to the last "day of grace." Well: I am pitching into Theokritos, as I shan't have another chance. It is very slow work, as I do it, with all the Variorum comparisons, but it is beautiful work, and I am fast learning how to write English hexameter *as it should be written*—and if ever God lets me finish this translation as I wish to, my life will not have been wholly wasted. Thinking of it, I become enraged at the concatenation of events which have cheated me out of my hard-earned two years of art-work.

Shall not think of business till after July 4th. Would have been better off if I had cleared out a fortnight sooner. The omens were against us!

Could write some splendid Lake George letters for Sweetser, but have quite an aversion to anything but Theokritos and lake-fishing, air, and scenery. O, if you were only here—we say fifty times a day! The better time will and shall come for both of us.

I have the *Round Table*, and your Literariana is really a great feature, especially to a young man only thirty-two years old, in the country. Well: how are you getting on, and how does the blue-table do to write upon? And are you getting at poetry? We think of you constantly, dear old boy, depend on't. You have never seemed so near to us all as this Spring. Is Wilson with you yet? I do hope he'll get the C. H. berth. It won't do for us all to take to the water at once, and without life-preservers.

I've read "Afraja" through with greater zest than any book which I've met for years. It is at once epic and idyllic—a splendid, healthy opening-up of a region almost unknown—and as fresh and salty (at once) as the breezes and billows of the Northern sea. What a contrast to our sickly Anglo-American method! I should like to try at just such a book, with the scenes among the Maine lumbermen or the Old Colony mackerellers. But psha! one always feels the schoolboy impulse to reproduce the latest big-thing he observes.

Write more poetry, and a prose article, for the *Galaxy*. Send me the next Number with my article. If you see Clarke, my love to him. Shouldn't write so much, if I didn't know you were lonelier than I. "Tis he who stays behind that feels the loss." You need give me only a line to say how you are. That's the main point. . . .

[Marginal Notes]: Your copy of *The Republic* is delicious, and just the thing to go a-drifting with.

Killing this Crotalus has brought out all the old snake-stories of our host, and I could get up an article on snakes for *Our Young Folks* to match the unwritten one on the Dorg—Leoné.

Laura says: write if you don't find all needful arrangements there. If you *want* whiskey, there is a key to Blue Beard's closet, (closet in the attic-front) in the lower, left-hand, library-table drawer. There is a little whiskey left up there which may serve you on a rainy night.

By the end of June, his business affairs became alarmingly worse. In a letter to his mother, Stedman says:

. . . I am heart-broken, sick, almost insane, at the hopeless and helpless condition of my affairs. At the moment when I ought to be hard at work, at *something*, I am so *stunned* that I cannot get at work, or, indeed, find anything to do. In a few months I have large amounts, for me, to pay—*which must be paid*—and have been deprived of all my means. I cannot even raise $2000. to work with in business. It can only end in a *forced* sale of our house, and my return to the old hand-to-mouth labor as a newspaper-*drudge*—and this just as I am commencing solid work and am mentioned honorably everywhere. It is hard. I am here, fishing, etc., and "thinking I am trying to think" what steps to take. After the Fourth I shall go to New York and do *something*, for I am absolutely destitute. Meanwhile I am in receipt of letters like the enclosed, congratulating me on my return to letters and on the possession of ample means! Now I agreed to write some letters from Lake George, (Summer and fishing epistles) for the *Round Table*—and have material for a number; but I have not had the *heart* to touch pen to paper; the pittance I would earn by it is *nothing* to the amount I need, and it would seem like mere dawdling when I have such an "impending crisis." But I have worked a good deal at Theocritus, as I don't know when I'll have another three weeks leisure for staple work, and have partly forgotten myself in it.—*Don't* ask me to do any writing till I can see daylight. I am in no fit condition, but almost *distracted* with these troubles, which prudence makes me conceal until they are manifestly irretrievable. . . . Please positively say nothing of my business disclosures to anybody.

As had been planned, after the Fourth of July, Stedman went back to the city. He realized in less than twenty-four hours, that, with his frail health, he could not long resist the intense heat of the town, nor the oppressive excitement of business perplexities. Heroically, he remained until his money matters "looked better"; and, until, he felt that he might "get through with Heaven's help." Then, he returned to Lake George, where for some weeks, partially freed from financial distress, he had the deep contentment of working on his Theocritus—sailing and fishing on alternate days.

To make a complete metrical version of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus, was to his last hour the Flying Dutchman of Mr. Stedman's life. He did complete his prose translation, much of which was made during the Summer of 1866. In his closing years, he wrote to Thomas B. Mosher: "Encouraged by Mr. Lowell I undertook it, made a comparative revision of the original texts and a complete prose translation with elaborate notes; also rendered various idyls into English hexameters; but then had to lay the whole thing by and earn my bread and butter. I consoled myself with the reflection that the work I had done was not wholly thrown away. It had given me a lot of scholarly training and discipline."

Referring to this training, in his personal note-book, Stedman says:

> The best piece of mental discipline that I recall, as it now seems to me, was that when nearing thirty, I was led into a serious study of Greek, which occupied my study hours for a year or two. Before it ended, I had translated, in the original metres, a group of poets, whose text was then so greatly in dispute that I made a rendition for my own use, by the collation of nearly a score of existing texts. When the job was nearly ended, I reflected that one's freshest years should be given to original work, and such excursions might well be deferred to the pleasures of old age. My time seemed to have been wasted. But the work gave me a scholar's dislike for scamping, a respect for exactness, and all in all it gave me both restraint and execution. After it I wrote with twice the ease,

certainty, and—I think—clearness of vision. In short, it braced and rendered flexible whatever faculties I had. I was so late in studying hard, that I think no less arduous a task would have done this. That translation may never see the light, but for the translator it was, I now realize, one of the most remunerative toils of his literary career.

Professor James Herbert Morse, for many years a cherished friend of Mr. Stedman, writes the following memories of his undying Greek spirit: "Mr. Stedman was by intellectual quickness and sympathy, a Greek—a Greek of the 'glancing eye.' I have in mind, first of all a memorable evening far back—I could not now give the date—when, in his own home, he turned over for me the leaves of a scrap-book devoted to Theocritus. It was an accumulation of notes, references, and quotations, and some tentative translations of passages from the great master of the Idyl. This purpose, long cherished yet never carried out, to take up the task of rendering into English in fitting Idyllic form the Doric poet may have had its beginning in the days when his intimate friend Bayard Taylor was engaged in that other task, the rendering of Goethe's 'Faust' into English. As Taylor had by soft degrees become, if not a full-blooded, at least a full-brained German, and talked Goethe in his sleep, so Stedman was a flashing-eyed sailor of the Ægean, never wearying of the blue deeps. His ingrained sympathy with the free spirit of the Hellene; his fine touch and mastery of the art of verse, would have made him the ideal interpreter of the ever-delightful master of the Lyric form of Theocritus. The sympathy and skill came out more fully in his own later verse. In the Seventies, when I began to see much of him at the Century Club, he seldom allowed me to forget, even if I had wished to do so, that I was one of a company of gentlemen who met every Friday, under the name of the 'Greek Club,' to read the Greek authors, and his conversation, when we were together, fell often into line with the course of our readings at the Club. The 'Greeks' consisted of a dozen 'regulars,' and as many more 'occasionals.' No member was fined for coming late, or expelled for non-attendance. Its membership was largely made up of men who were more or less in Stedman's circle:—Professor Henry Drisler, then at the height of his full and rich scholarship, editing the American edition of the well-known Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon; Reverend Doctor Howard Crosby, then, or a little before that time, Chancellor of the New York University, and a deeply-read student of the Greek; Charlton T. Lewis, [a classmate of Stedman,] who at that time, in connection with Professor Charles Short, was engaged in editing, or rather remaking, the famous Andrews' Latin Lexicon; William P. Prentice, late Counsel for the Board of Health; Isaac Hall, long of the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts; Doctor John G. Curtis, in 1910 Professor at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and Mr. Seth Low—plain 'Mr.' then, and until Brooklyn called him away from Greek to a more strenuous service. Titles have since multiplied, and 'stand thick upon him.' These were only a few of the members of the Club. Others there were—fine scholars and lovable men. Stedman often expressed a wish to join the company, but when I urged him to do so, he thought a moment, then said:—'No, I am tied down to journalism, to poetry, to Wall Street.' His heart was in Greece, and how well he was equipping himself for valuable services in such a club, is perhaps indicated in a letter written to me June 9, 1883, from his New Castle home:

Forget that you are a Bostonian and don't address me so formally. I am reading so much of your clever work, of late, that I feel very well acquainted with you—well enough to venture on dropping the Mister, and 'tis quite time you paid me the same compliment.

Your note enclosing the letter to Dr. Sachs [1] (whom I take to be Hans Sachs' great-great-great-grandson) has been forwarded hither to me. Penelope and I have retired again to rocky Ithaca. We have a cottage here, "over against" Whale-Back Light and the Isles of Shoals, and the fishermen's children around us haven't the least idea that I am an authority on Theocritus and the New Doric.—N. B. I don't mean they shall find it out, either.

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[1] A member of the Greek Club, and a rare scholar.

There is no end of English metrical versions of Theocritus and his mates—Bion and Moschus. First, the 18th Century versions—the stilted heroic verse—of Creech, Fawkes, Polwhele, etc. Better—Chapman's translation in modern heroics—Dr. Sachs will find it bound up with a literal prose "pony," in Bohn's Classical series.—Better still: Calverley's translation, and Fitz-Gerald's translation, both somewhat free and both quite poetic—in ballad-measures and blank verse.—Best of all: Andrew Lang's literal, scholarly, somewhat archaic, but thoroughly delightful, rendering into rhythmical English prose, published by Macmillan, and to be found at his New York store. These are all I can think of that are worth your friend's attention. Tennyson never has published any translation, so far as I remember. But he cribbed a good deal from them: teste, "Victorian Poets," Chapter VI, q. v.

"On returning from a visit to Europe on one occasion Stedman told me of his meeting with poets and literary men of all classes, and with them he made it a point to brag of the Greek Club as an evidence of scholarship in America. He found his auditors astonished, he said, that the 'classics' should have their lovers here. Somehow they seemed to suppose that we were all to a man engaged wildly in the pursuit of 'the almighty dollar.' I was able to remind him that the official classes knew better; that a Parliamentary Commission, sent here to ascertain what was really being done in America for scholarship, had returned home and reported the existence of the Greek Club in New York as evidence of a love for such learning. Surely Stedman, if he had put his hand to the Greek poet, would have made Theocritus an English classic, as Taylor had done with the German Goethe."

On December 30, 1887, when the Greek Club celebrated its thirtieth anniversary, Stedman was one of its invited guests. Writing of the occasion for the *Christian Union* in an article entitled "Athens in New York," Dr. William C. Wilkinson says:

Acclamation summoned Mr. Stedman to his feet. He made a charming speech, in the true spirit of the Attic occasion. In the course of it he disclaimed for himself the quality of scholarship in Greek; but Dr. Drisler very happily, not denying to him in form his disclaimer, rejoined that at least there was a gentleman of the same name in the city whose studies of Theocritus paralleled with Tennyson were well known to entitle him to the rank of Greek scholar. How true was this delicate praise of Mr. Stedman's Greek scholarship, beyond what the general literary public can be supposed to suspect, the present writer had the opportunity of learning that same evening after the symposium was done. He was privately shown the pages in manuscript of a study by Mr. Stedman of Theocritus in the original text which exhibited the poet and the critic in the character of a critical scholar and editor. When Mr. Stedman reaches the limit of age—far be it!—beyond which he must cease to write poetry of his own, then—and not till then!—may we see in print the final version in meter of Theocritus from his hand!

It was very graceful—and it was a grace that he could afford—when Mr. Stedman in his turn called out a Yale classmate of his, by saying that in an English university town he once had found himself made little of until it chanced to come out that he knew a scholar who had done monumental work in the making of a recent Latin lexicon. English scholars were then ready with attentions to him, as soon as they learned that he enjoyed the personal friendship of Charlton T. Lewis.

The rare manuscript book of Mr. Stedman's study of the Sicilian Idyllists, to which Professor Morse and Dr. Wilkinson have referred, is still in existence. During a grave illness, Mr. Stedman gave directions to have the manuscript burned in event of his death; his unperfected ideal should perish with him. But so invaluable are the references, so inaccessible many of the texts and their notes, that the book has been preserved, believing that it deserves completion by some other scholar and poet.

Concerning his plan for the Sicilian Idyllists, in February, 1866, Stedman had consulted Professor James Hadley—his old master of Greek at Yale:

The comity which obtains among writers, and the fact that I value your opinion above that of other American scholars, are my only warrant for soliciting advice from you as to a question of choice between certain Greek texts—I have been making some preliminary essays toward a complete, metrical, English version of the idyls of Theocritus, Moschus, and Bion. There seems to be room for such a work, and it would have been well accomplished ere now, but for the fact that few, who have been successfully devoted to poetry, have been sufficient masters of the Greek; and those who have possessed both requirements—like Matthew Arnold, Shelley, Mrs. Browning, Hunt, Swinburne, etc., have rather made their scholarship an aid to their original English art, than their poetical powers subservient to a rendering of the antique forms. Creech, Polwhele, and other early translators of the Syracusan poets emasculated and Latinized them, as Pope treated Homer. Chapman's version (published, 1836) is close, artistic, and spirited; but he has given us anything but the Greek feeling—translating, for instance, the Epitaph of Bion and kindred idyls, into English *Spencerian*, and, of course, losing all the flow of the original, and the effect of the refrain—in short, subduing all the distinctive beauties of the Dorian song. But to my point. I have made use of the Kiessling text, (translated by Volpy, 1829), and of Weise's (Tauchnitz) and finally of Didot's grand 8vo. edition edited by Ameis (1846). The latter is *based* on the *second* edition of *Meineke*, (Berlin, 1836), and Ameis, in his preface, gives such an elaborate account of over thirty texts which he compared, and of the assistance received from scholars and librarians all over Europe, that I settled down on his reading, as the *basis* of my version, with a great degree of comfort. But recently my attention has been called to the text of Professor Ahrens—whose high standing makes me loth to neglect his views; yet the latter embarrass me greatly, differing *widely* from those of all other standard editors. I send you to-day the cheap edition of his text in case you may not have it on your shelves, and, in order to indicate what I mean, have marked on page 111, *et seq.*, a few cases of his divergence from the standard to which Kiessling, Meineke, etc., have generally deferred. Some of these new renderings are of course taken from the codices which Ahrens believes to be the most trustworthy, but others are, it *seems to me*, guesses of his own as to the most poetical or grammatical "way of doing things."—

So I am in this dilemma. On the one hand, I have respect for the labor and scholarship of Ahrens. On the other, if I conform to his text, I shall have to differ from that of everybody else, and I shall be "pitched into" by many critics. Again, many of his finest translations do not seem to state the meaning or intent. . . . So I wish to cling to Ameis, if I dare; and the object of this letter is to ask you if you think I may safely do so, of course adopting such of Ahrens readings as seem to me more poetical or natural, than the standard. The latter you undoubtedly have in some one of the editions I have named.

Any suggestions which you may think to add—either on these technical matters, or in relation to the "intent I have in mind"—will be very gratefully received and valued more than I can well express.

If you remember at all the freshmen of the class of 1853, whom you took through certain Odysseys, you may possibly remember the youngest, most friendless, most careless and unworthy of them all—and that lad was your present correspondent. With no one to look after me, I became a *very* bad boy, studied little but English literature, reverenced my Greek and desired no honors except the first prize for English Composition. Left College when half through, and was writing for a living when the class graduated. Yet I had a genuine love for the antique and have since paid such attention as an author's life allows to acquiring a better knowledge of the Greek language and literature. Boy as I was, under you, I could yet appreciate the radical methods of study which you were the first to introduce to this country; and as a man, I have found your grammar an indispensible reliance. My profession is that of a journalist, and I have been an editor of the *Tribune;* and now write for our leading magazines and reviews, etc., and have published some books. One of the latter (as it has a poem on a classic theme not lately handled, and into which I have tried to infuse the true *objective* Greek feeling,) I take the liberty of sending you with the Ahrens-text.—These personal details are only mentioned, as you may justly claim the right to know who is addressing you.—It will give me the greatest pleasure to reciprocate, in any way, and at all times, and to acknowledge the courtesy asked by me.

From James Hadley.

NEW HAVEN, February 19, 1866.

I am glad to hear from you, and to learn that you propose translating Theocritus. He wants a good translator; and your literary talents and training qualify you well for the task. You will find the work interesting and attractive, though, I am afraid, far from easy. It has been said that the hardest thing for a writer is to be easy, and the least natural thing to be natural: and if this is true as a general aphorism, it has an especial truth in reference to translations. The ease and naturalness of Theocritus are precisely the qualities most difficult to reproduce in an English version. In dealing with a poet like Pindar, the translator may allow himself to use expressions which are peculiar, quaint, remote from the language of ordinary life; for such is the style of his original; but with Theocritus he must allow himself no such liberty, or, at any rate, must use it only to a very moderate extent.

As regards the choice of a text, my judgment coincides with your own.

. . . .

Accept my thanks for the volume of your poems: I have read it with much interest and pleasure. The Alectryôn, in particular, strikes me as one of the most successful modern-antiques—modern pieces on antique themes—that I have ever seen. I hope that without giving up your translation of the bucolic poets, you will take up other subjects from the fields of ancient mythology or history, and give them, as in this case, a treatment of your own. That your talents were such as could hardly fail to gain distinction, I never doubted while you were here in New Haven: nor was I ignorant that you were thrown upon the temptations and dangers of a College life under circumstances more than usually unfavorable. And as I have heard of you from time to time, I have been glad to see that you would not allow one failure to discourage you, but that you would still labor for that honorable standing which a right and faithful use of your powers was certain to bring you.

I thank you sincerely for the expressions of kind remembrance in your letter, and trust that you will always continue to regard me as a friend. If I can help you further in your proposed work of translation, or in any other way, I trust you will not fail to let me know it.

The following June, 1867, when Stedman learned that his friend, Bayard Taylor, was to visit the haunts of Theocritus, he wrote of a plan, which changes in the route of travel rendered it impossible for Mr. Taylor to fulfill:

> Although it looks now, I tell you frankly, as though I should never publish my Theocritus (or any other book) I want your aid against the eventuality. You are going to Sicily. Now I want you, my dear Bayard, to do honor to me and my work, and perchance to yourself, by writing me a letter from there, partly descriptive of the region, etc., for insertion in my volume. You can see something of what I mean by examining Milman's "Life of Horace," which is so beautifully issued—sometimes bound in with the last edition of Milman's "Horace," and sometimes bound by itself.
>
> To this life is appended a very noticeable letter by *G. Dennis*, from Licenza, (hard by the Sabine Farm), entitled "De Villa Horatii," and depicting all the traditional points, etc., etc.—Now some such a letter from you, written expressly for this work, and bearing upon (e. g.) ancient and modern Syracuse, the temples of Diana and Minerva, the Island of Ortygia, the fountain of Arethusa, the Marshes, the river Anapus, the fountain of Cyane (where Pluto descended with Proserpine) or Hybla, or Megara, or Enna (now Castrogiovanni) or any or all of these; and saying what you choose of the present pastoral doings on the hill-sides, etc., etc., (these are mere hints). Some such a letter would be of the greatest interest everywhere and of lasting value. What say you? I mention it with diffidence, and don't know but I am wrong in mentioning it at all.
>
> Again—Theocritus is very profuse in his names of the *flora* of his day and region. Now I am going to prepare a list of all the flowers and herbs, etc., which he names, with the nearest modern translation I can get at, and what existing species I suppose he represents. This I shall soon send to you, and if in your Sicilian tour you can correct it somewhat, it will be of great service to me. Fortunately, Theocritus names the common and popular plants and trees, most of which are, I suppose, still found there and classified by modern botanists.—You see I am not going to let such a friend as you go to my preserved ground without paying me for poaching. And I know you will begin to think that I am as bold and unscrupulous in foraging for my pet hobby, as a mother in begging food for a starving child.

Two years later, when Stedman published a new volume of his poetical work, entitled "The Blameless Prince, and other Poems," he included two specimens of his translations from the study of the Sicilian-Doric poetry—"The Reapers" and "Hylas," a portion of the Tenth, and the whole of the Thirteenth Idyls of Theocritus. It was exceedingly gratifying to him that Thomas Wentworth Higginson should write: "I want to tell you how thoroughly I am delighted with your *Hylas*, the only one of the two which I have yet read with the Greek. It seems to me that nobody in America except Longfellow has ever made so good a metrical translation. It delighted me on first reading by its freshness, flow and vigor, but I could not believe it literal till on examination I found it almost verbatim. You handle the hexameter as easily as if it were a prose version. I send the few criticisms that occur to me, and shall certainly take some way of saying in print how much I admire this poem."

The *Round Table* took occasion to find fault with Stedman for his use of the English hexameter. Instantly replying to his critic, Stedman says: "Where one of two evils has been unavoidable, I have chosen to write careless hexameters, which should represent the length and meaning of their originals, rather than to employ smooth 'blank-verse'—for example—and thereby increase the number of lines by one-third. As you credit me with artistic versification in other poems, you perhaps may be willing to assume that were I to use the English hexameter for original poetry I could display some degree of mastery over the measure. . . . The English hexameter is a very different measure from the Greek. Of course, the point to attain is the nearest possible consonance of accent and quantity; yet the critic should ask himself, Does this verse please the average English ear? Does it flow smoothly and strongly to the ear, independently of its effect upon the eye? Is there an adequate 'general effect'? And should not have too much in mind the laws of quantity under which students of the classics are trained."

In 1871, with a renewal of work, after three years, upon his translation of the Sicilian Idyllists, Stedman prepared an essay on *Tennyson and Theocritus*, with passages from Theocritus which had been imitated by Tennyson. This essay he completed in April, 1871, "after great labor at such intervals of health and leisure as I could obtain." He further writes, "May never be able to complete my translation; but thought best to do this one essay, thoroughly, at all events." After the paper was published in the *Atlantic*, November, 1871, Stedman received a letter which he considered "beautiful and inspiring," and from a man whom he loved and admired, whom he thought one "of the best critics and sweetest souls—as he is the first Grecian—in America."

From James Hadley.

New Haven, November 4, 1871.

I am sincerely obliged to you for the copy lately received of your essay on Tennyson and Theocritus in the November number of the *Atlantic Monthly*. I have read it with great interest and pleasure. It is rich in criticism of a kind that one does not meet with often enough to lessen the enjoyment it gives, the criticism which is founded on long, careful and sympathetic study of the authors criticised. That Tennyson has been influenced by Theocritus in a marked and important degree can hardly be questioned by any one who weighs the proofs given in your article. I almost wonder at myself for having never thought of it. For many years I have been a reader of Tennyson, and never since my first reading of him have doubted that he was the great poet of our time; and among the singers of my Greek Parnassus Theocritus has always been a favorite with me. Yet the idea of any special connection between the two never came to my mind; and I have to thank you for a literary discovery which seems to me one of no little interest. I must thank you also for the exquisite bits of translation from Theocritus: for felicity and finish I know nothing superior to them. I feel impatient to see a whole Theocritus from the same hand, though I know well enough that translation such as that must be a work of time. It would be wrong to hurry Pan, who should rather be allowed to wait his own time for the new appearance in Wall Street.

I am truly obliged to you also for the kind words in which you have spoken of me. My labors with the Freshmen came to an end some years ago. Interrupted at first by prolonged ill-health, they have never been resumed. This part of my old work has fallen to a successor (Professor Packard) certainly not less capable of enjoying Greek poetry, and, I trust, not less solicitous than I was about the second aorist. Perhaps it is the pædagogical instinct, but I feel that we must still try to give our students an exact grammatical knowledge of the Greek language. I am more afraid we shall not succeed in this, than that our success will extinguish the poetic sensibility in them. At all events, I shall be satisfied if the men who go out with our training produce such fruits for literature as I find in the essay for which I again thank you.

In his diary, January 7, 1877, Stedman writes: "Finished to-day the long paper on the literary significance of Schliemann's discoveries at Mycenæ. It is for the *Tribune*, but I suddenly discover that I have written a first-class lecture. It has translations from Homer, Æschylus, etc."

Upon the publication of the article a competent critic said:

Edmund Clarence Stedman has made a thorough study of the literary aspects of Dr. Schliemann's discovery at Mycenæ, and his spirited translations from Homer and Æschylus give new interest to the old tale of Agamemnon's murder, which, he thinks, was the prototype of Shakespeare's Macbeth. Clytemnestra was a Greek Lady Macbeth. He thinks Dr. Schliemann's discoveries raise a probability in favor of his theory, though they do not establish it. Mr. Stedman thoroughly appreciates the literary value of these discoveries and the new interest they throw back on Homer and the great Greek dramatists.

Dr. Schliemann himself adds:

I hasten to thank you most cordially for your splendid article which I have read with great admiration. I am quite proud to see the profound interest which my fellow citizens take in my discoveries at Troy and Mycenæ; in fact the appreciation of my labours by the great American people is the noblest and most flattering reward I can wish for, and at the same time it is the greatest encouragement I could possibly receive for the continuation of my hard toil on the field of science. Excuse me I cannot write more being overwhelmed with occupation. As a feeble token of my gratitude I enclose my portrait.

And Mr. Longfellow, in speaking of this article, says: "Your beautiful version of a passage from the Odyssey shows me that you are the man, and not I to do the task you set me."

CHAPTER XIV

LITERARY IDEALS AND BUSINESS NECESSITIES

1866–1869

So, that Summer of 1866, after a few almost happy weeks devoted to his Theocritus, and to fishing, Stedman was forced back to New York to save his diminished resources. Sick and lonely enough was he those last days of Summer, struggling against the financial undertow; in the evening, except for occasional hours of absolute recreation, which his ardent nature demanded, despite exhaustion, and the unending fight for health to continue the next day, he wrote poetry, or answered his many letters. Two fears oppressed him; that he would lose his home, and that, in order to make money for the support of his family, he would again be compelled to stop his literary work. With his habitual lightning fluctuation of mood, and his passionate resolve not to degrade his Art by a reflection of any "common grief or joy"—it is not strange to hear him singing, even in the throes of anxieties similar to those which now beset him:

Prithee tell me, Dimple-Chin,
At what age does Love begin?
Your blue eyes have scarcely seen
Summers three, my fairy queen,
But a miracle of sweets,
Soft approaches, sly retreats,
Show the little archer there,
Hidden in your pretty hair;
When didst learn a heart to win?
Prithee tell me, Dimple-Chin!

"Oh!" the rosy lips reply,
"I can't tell you if I try.
'T is so long I can't remember:
Ask some younger lass than I!"

Tell, O tell me, Grizzled-Face,
Do your heart and head keep pace?
When does hoary Love expire,
When do frosts put out the fire?
Can its embers burn below
All that chill December snow?
Care you still soft hands to press,
Bonny heads to smooth and bless?
When does Love give up the chase?
Tell, O tell me, Grizzled-Face!

"Ah!" the wise old lips reply,
"Youth may pass and strength may die;
But of Love I can't foretoken:
Ask some older sage than I!"

Too soon one at least of Stedman's fears was realized. But confronted sternly by the inevitable, it found him dauntless, determined, as always, to conquer what for the moment was conquering him. His objective interest in universal matters, his high spirit soaring above any hurt, flashes in a letter, which at this hour he wrote to Bayard Taylor:

> I would have given several Xs to have attended the Philadelphia convention, despite the predominance of Tilton—whose principles are to me more agreeable than his person. At the close of this War—which absorbed all my sympathies in its years of prelude and Olympiad of progress—I began a *nunc dimittis*, and declared it impossible for me to feel a renewed interest in political affairs. But I see that the great moral contest now begins, and that the sequel to the drama may be more than the drama itself. So I am really around again, and preaching, as of old, faith and righteousness to the Philistines of Wall Street. This city *reeks* with the bourgeoise spirit—*any* concessions to save trade and keep things quiet. Did you note a rhythmical, doggerel letter [1] from Seward to Weed, alongside of your Colorado letter in Saturday's *Tribune?* I did it, *no one but John* [Russell] *Young* [of the New York *Tribune*] *being in the secret*, and it would have appeared there days earlier

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[1] *A Reconstruction Letter*, September 8, 1866.

and on the outside, but for the immense telegraphic pressure last week. As it is, as the painters say, it was hung in a bad light, and I have concluded not to continue the series. I rather enjoyed the hits at Raymond and Beecher. You can understand that I do feel these things, if I am moved to write in my present state of mind and heart.

Laura has returned to put the house in order, as we offer it for sale this week. She has gone over night to Connecticut to leave the boys with their Aunt, and will be back here to-morrow. Good-bye, No. 184! "Andy" is in his cage in the back-yard, and rattles so loudly and continuously at the cats, that Dick swears he can't write evenings and dreams of him nights. He ("Andy") grows more like his god-father daily, and seems to regard me as malevolently as A. J. did the fellow who chaffed him at Cleveland. I fully agree with you that Swinburne shows a morbid emasculation in his apotheosis of the Sicilian and Sapphic vices, etc. . . . H. & H. are still in doubt as to publishing the book, and I tell Dick that I *know* they will decide against so doing.

Your beautiful and successful sonnet of "The Poet's Home" goes to my heart just now, and I thank you for sending it. There is something about the close which reminds me of Byron's "I am as a weed, and,"—but his is all melancholy and wretchedness, while yours is based in sweet content and natural law. I would dearly love to visit you if I could. Laura and I had intended you should pass a month with us this Winter—*Violà tout*—Were she here to-day, she would join with me in love to you all.

In his diary for September 22, 1866, Stedman remarks: "My house sold to Mrs. Emma F. Ryan for $20,000., including Furniture, and we are without a home again—but in cheerful hope to use this money, (the balance accruing to us), to make another competence. A high price and a good sale." Greatly encouraged, but also wondering when he could "write anymore," Stedman seized his moment to finish, "with great delight and care"—"Pan in Wall Street." Of it he speaks to W. D. Howells:

NEW YORK, September 30, 1866.

I received your good letter with great pleasure—and, as I have hitherto given you my own notion of your book, have now only to write you my hearty congratulations on the genuine praises which it has met at the hands of the reviewers everywhere. Your prose is so unaffected and simple, and at the same time so subtle, that when its simplicities and subtleties are observed and enjoyed by the general public a new era is surely dawning on our popular taste. It is good to see a fellow succeeding without any clap-trap, and encourages all the rest of us to do better than we have done.

We have sold our house, at a round price, to a "party" sent straight from Heaven to buy it, and are going a-boarding again. Never mind: I'll have a prettier home in three years, (or a long one), and, though resuming business, do *not* mean to forget my purer mission.

This morning I sent to Mr. Fields (who wrote to me about contributions in the Spring) a poem for the *Atlantic*, which I have long had in mind and have at last put on paper. Did you ever see the man who plays the *real* Pan's pipe around the Wall Street district? He has given me a chance for a rhapsody in the method of the "Ballad of Lager Bier," "Peter Stuyvesant's New Year's Call," etc. I was greatly tempted to let Mullin draw a headpiece (of the old fellow) and print it, illustrated, in the *Galaxy*—but am anxious to give the *Atlantic* a more characteristic poem than it took from me last June.

It seems we are to have two Magazines here—one by Hurd & Houghton, they say. Dana, Wesley & Co. are to start a newspaper. No other news,—About New Years Mrs. S. and I will perhaps visit Boston for a week.

In sending his poem to Mr. Fields, Stedman explained that the treatment was in that middle-style, between the real and unreal, which it always gave him pleasure to attempt or to observe. The response which came from Mr. Fields, he found "quite encouraging."

Bravo! "Pan in Wall Street" couldn't be better and I am only sorry I can't squeeze it into our next Number.—In the line

"Though pants he wore of mongrel hue,"

I hope you will substitute *trousers*—*pants* being a word below the mark of so excellent a piece. It is A. 1. I will print the poem just as soon as I can find a good niche for it.

In reply, Stedman said:

Your hearty estimate of "Pan in Wall Street" pleases me exceedingly—for I'll own that it is a pet poem and I should have been disappointed if it hadn't found you in a sympathetic mood. Thanks, both for your plaudits and your criticism—which latter seems to me well put. "Pants" *is* an American vulgarism, and no mistake:—but you are a poet yourself, and if you'll just try to alter that stanza with anything else, and to preserve the effect, you'll appreciate the exigencies of the case. The best I can do is to substitute the enclosed for the entire stanza, if you deem it, on the whole, an improvement. As I use "concealed" in the last line, I change that word to "hidden thus" in the second. The new verse is also faulty in having the same structure in the fifth and seventh lines, but I can't better it. "Pants" may be tolerated, when you recollect that Pan is in a Yankee street and guise, and observed by a Yankee—but choose according to your judgment, (which I most sincerely respect).

The final portrait of the minstrel, reads

A ragged cap was on his head;
  But—hidden thus—there was no doubting
That, all with crispy locks o'erspread,
  His gnarlèd horns were somewhere sprouting;
His club-feet, cased in rusty shoes,
  Were crossed, as on some frieze you see them,
And trousers, patched of divers hues,
  Concealed his crooked shanks beneath them.

He filled the quivering reeds with sound,
  And o'er his mouth their changes shifted,
And with his goat's-eyes looked around
  Where'er the passing current drifted;
And soon, as on Trinacrian hills
  The nymphs and herdsmen ran to hear him,
Even now the tradesmen from their tills,
  With clerks and porters, crowded near him.

The bulls and bears together drew
  From Jauncey Court and New Street Alley,
As erst, if pastorals be true,
  Came beasts from every wooded valley;

The random passers stayed to list,—
  A boxer Ægon, rough and merry,
A Broadway Daphnis, on his tryst
  With Nais at the Brooklyn Ferry.

. . . .

O heart of Nature, beating still
  With throbs her vernal passion taught her,—
Even here, as on the vine-clad hill,
  Or by the Arethusan water!
New forms may fold the speech, new lands
  Arise within these ocean-portals,
But Music waves eternal wands,—
  Enchantress of the souls of mortals!

Howells writing to Stedman of "Pan in Wall Street" said:

> You are the one man living who can do that sort of Bernesque thing perfectly in English. (There never was poetic tipple better than your "Lager Bier.") It is an excellent natural grace of yours which I think you can't make too much of. Only a few in any country have had it—no one in England or America, as I said, in such full measure as yourself.
>
> I am only half sorry that you must go into business again: the Muse is a friend to hard work and pays frequenter visits to laborer's leisure than that of idlers. You are lucky, moreover, I think in having your business utterly *illiterate*, or *unliterate*. This half and half work of mine is fatal to pure thought in any direction.

"'Pan in Wall Street' gave me genuine pleasure," said Eugene Benson. "The freshness and vitality of your poem made a strong impression upon me, and the *skill* with which you brought the god, the rural god of the Greeks, dear amorous jolly old Pan, into Wall Street, and maintained the natural spirit—heart-easing mirth and music—in the midst of transformations of time and costume, is to me inimitable. I gratify myself rather than compliment you in thus expressing my appreciation of your work."

Stedman's thirty-third birthday found him with many new hopes and fears, boarding at 34 West Fifteenth Street.

Also, he had leased new office quarters at 19 Broad Street; and on his birthday, October 8, 1866, reopened his brokerage business. "Am now," he says, "obliged to leave Art again and take up the Muck Rake." It was a satisfaction to his scrupulous honesty, by the sale of his home, to have settled his affairs so that he owed no one a dollar. A note in his diary shows his integrity: "Graham (generous fellow!) has been offering me a partner with large capital. But I dare not assume the responsibility, my health being so poor."

But no obstacle had the power to keep him long from the side of his beloved Muse. Within a few days, he writes: "Inspirited by a cheering message from Professor Lowell, have resolved I will do some real work, money or no money, and have recommenced at Theocritus. He has little to do, I find, with the price of Erie."

Another message which Stedman was glad to receive, although its admonition grieved him, was one from his old friend, Assistant Attorney-General T. J. Coffey: "I noticed with great pleasure and interest in the early Summer that you were busy with your pen. . . . No single production of this year attracted more attention or was more admired than your poem of the cholera ship.[1] Some of its stanzas had the power of the best of the *Ancient Mariner*. You ought not to be silent when you can sing in such strains." Still another message, bringing both pleasure and pain, came from Mrs. Stoddard: "I always feel when you have written a poem as if a new act of duty was performed by you."

The previous Spring, of 1866, Colonel Church had offered Stedman the editorship of a literary department of the *Galaxy*. The latter, then for the first time free to do his own literary work, felt that it was not wise for him to accept such a position. Now, in November, 1866, as he was recommencing business, similar requests, from many quarters, were received by him. He considered that they were all "too late" for his present needs and strength; he well knew that if he should accept any editorial work, his health would absolutely preclude creative writing.

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[1] "Spoken at Sea."

A pleasant diversion in the November days was a farewell supper which Stedman and some other friends arranged for James Lorimer Graham, Jr., on the eve of his departure for France. Later, Mr. Graham was appointed U. S. Consul-General to Italy, residing in Florence, where he died in 1876. The affair, of which Stedman had full charge from its inception, sparing neither time nor ingenuity to make it a brilliant success, took place at Delmonico's on the night of November 16, 1866. It was a distinguished occasion, exceedingly gratifying to Mr. Graham, the mirth lingering till 3 A. M., when it was finally dissipated with *Auld Lang Syne*. Bayard Taylor, Cranch, Boker, and Stedman mingled with the wit of the evening some impromptu verses: The following by Stedman show the quality of his fun, his genial fellowship, and give an index to those who gathered to bid their comrade farewell. (The original copy of the stanzas presented by Stedman to Graham displays Stedman's proud care and delight in making his gift as attractive as possible. His manuscript is neatly penned and tied in documental form.)

AD GRAHAMUM ABEUNTUM

Take, France, from whom we take so much
  Of wisdom and of folly,
Take that which shall reward your clutch
  And leave us melancholy!
Receive within your sunniest part,
  Where life's ripe fruitage mellows,
This comrade boon of Song and Art
  And peer of all Good Fellows.

. . . .

But how the red, red wine shall pour,
  And how the wit shall waken,
When, back from sunny France, once more
  He claims his seat forsaken,

The word shall flit from mouth to mouth,
And everyone I name me
Shall bring, from North or East or South,
His "*Welcome hame to Jamie!*"

Then *Barker's* handsome face will shine,
And *Kensett's* eyes will glisten,
And *Lang* shall sing our "*Auld Lang Syne*"
And *Gray* the punch shall christen;
Venetian *Cranch* again shall chant
The fate of "Little Billee,"
Perennial *Stansbury* descant
Upon his latest filly;

And *Bowles* "Across the Continent"
Shall haste to share our glory,
And *Barstow*, ere the night be spent,
Shall tell his hundredth story;
While *Mitchell* from his Sabine Farm,
Will gently glide atween us,
With Virgil yet beneath his arm,
To greet returned Mæcenas;

And *Bond* shall bind again, as now,
Our circle-ends together,
And smoothe his broad, judicial brow,
And make it sunny weather;
Bierstadt will leave his artist-throne
Among the Hudson breezes,
And *Hunt* and *Thompson*, famous grown,
Their architraves and friezes;

And *Boker's* laurelled head will loom
In mediæval [1] splendor,
While *Taylor's* muse shall hush the room,
And *Stoddard's* true and tender:
Methinks the draughts they'll swallow up
Will strain each swollen kidney,
While *Curtis* won't refuse his cup,
For once unlike his Sidney.

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[1] Middle-aged—but growing younger daily. [E. C. S.]

There's courtly *Blodgett* will be here
 And *Fiske* will share our rations,
And *Dodge*—I hold his virtues dear
 As though we weren't relations!
And, if to send a greeting back
 To France our hearts desire,
Undaunted *Field* we shall not lack
 Nor Field's immortal wire.

. . . .

While Stedman was the animated leader on such a sparkling night, his innermost spirit was sorely under constant discipline. Take these notes in his diary: "Thus far my good angel seems to have deserted me. Have been near two months in business with loss of about my whole capital—small as it was. It does seem almost impossible nowadays to do business *honorably* and succeed, so many scamps are to be dealt with."—"Thanksgiving Day and a dreary time of it at this boarding house,—'For now the whole Round Table is dissolved.'" "I work on Theocritus a little daily." But again he could forget his own setbacks in his wide and genuine sympathy and appreciation of the success of another: "Went with Stoddard to see Ward's model for the Shakespeare statue. It is wonderfully strong and grand. The first adequate conception, far superior to Launt's [Thompson]. Ward is a great man."

One of Stedman's letters at this period is to Mr. Lowell:

New York, November 25, 1866.

I send you by mail a nicely printed pamphlet,[1] because it will amuse you—as it does me—to see so cheap verses in so dear a dress. When the President was making his Western tour I wrote these rapid rhymes in an evening, and printed them in the *Tribune*, anonymously, meaning to make a series of such letters if I felt like it. But I was sick, and the press was crowded with facts and speeches, so I thought no more about it. The other day a Mr. Hoffmann sent to the *Tribune* a large paper copy, Bradstreet

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[1] "A Reconstruction Letter."

Press, of this letter. I have never put my dearest lyric in this selected guise, and would rather own Racket Lake than the Bodleian Library. But here is a gentleman with means and liking for such fancies. So I wrote him, declaring myself the ingenuous author and begging a copy for myself and one for you—and herewith is yours, if the mails be trusty.

Thanks for your courteous remembrance, through Church, of me and my Theocritus. The charge you gave me last Spring—"not to hasten and not to neglect" that translation—has, I see daily, a wealth of the wisdom of experience in it, and is written in my heart.

I have the second series of the "Biglow Papers," and, despite some critics, they suit my turn o' mind better than the first—having *more in them*, being stronger food for a lustier period. Of course, to this generation they have not that first charm of novelty. Years hence the two can be fairly compared, and not till then.

You see that our friend Grant White has one of his recurrent printed enthusiasms—this time over Swinburne's *Laus Veneris*.

We have sold our sweet little house, and are now, like most New Yorkers, miserable boarders. The cares of family subsistence,

"—that eternal want of pence
which vexes public men,"

make it almost impossible for me to write, study, or *think*, and constantly defer my *aureum sæculum* of congenial, professional labor.

From James Russell Lowell.

Elmwood, November 26, 1866.

I thank you heartily for your remembrance and for the copy of your clever satire, which I had not seen. It is full of good hits and it is a pity that you had not gone on, for *crescit eundo* is specially true of liveliness (where there is any), and it takes a little time for the mind to limber. I am truly glad that you like the new "Biglow Papers," and am obliged to you for saying so. I have not seen any notices of them, and care very little for such things. Indeed, I avoid seeing them so far as I can. I have sometimes wished that I cared more for the public than I do, but it is hard to change a habit of near thirty years; but I *do* like to be liked by my friends, and I hope always to reckon you among them. I still keep warm in my heart the pleasure which your cordial reception gave me last Winter in New York. I suppose this series wants something of the first-jump (as Montaigne calls it) gayety and good spirits of the earlier ones, but I think there is better stuff in it for all that. If I am less of an improvisator, I hope I am getting to be more of an artist, though I miss the crowd of eager fancies that used to haunt me night and day. Invention is the faculty which ages first, and the material to work in is scanted, while the skill to shape it grows.

I am trying to grow young again by a dip in the past. I have been overhauling my old manuscripts, and hope to finish some beginnings which have stood still ever since I was benumbed by sitting down in a professor's chair. One of these will appear in the January *Atlantic*, and I wish you to like it. The best parts of it have been lying in my desk these fifteen years. This would have more than satisfied Horace! As for me, I do not find that anything ripens in manuscript like pears in a drawer, for I cannot reform what I have once written. To carry a thing long in the mind is my receipt. It settles and clarifies, and you have only to tap it and draw it off the lees. I fancy this is what Horace meant after all.

I have not seen Swinburne's new volume—but a poem or two from it which I have seen shocked me, and I am not squeamish. . . . I am too old to have a painted *hetaira* palmed off on me for a Muse, and I hold unchastity of mind to be worse than that of body. Why should a man by choice go down to live in his cellar, instead of mounting to those fair upper chambers which look towards the sunrise of that Easter which shall greet the resurrection of the soul from the body of this death? *Virginibus puerisque?* To be sure! let no man write a line that he would not have his daughter read. When a man begins to lust after the Muse instead of loving her, he may be sure that it is never the Muse that he embraces. But I have outlived many heresies, and shall outlive this new Adamite one of Swinburne. The true Church of poetry is founded on a rock, and I have no fear that these smutchy back-doors of hell shall prevail against her. . . .

I wish you and Mrs. Stedman would make us a little visit. Why not come at Christmas and warm yourselves by our Yule-log? We have a real one still—a good old-fashioned fire of our own

> wood. Don't neglect Theocritus. It is an excellent thing to do, and to be done in hexameters. . . .

As had been his custom, since his first residence in New York, Stedman spent New Year's Day 1867 in making calls. About that time Bayard Taylor sent him a gift of an oil painting which Taylor had painted of the Acropolis. In thanking his friend, Stedman also says:

> I will not close this scrawl—written in a broker's office at such off-board moments as I can catch—without one word of our mutual yearning for those splendidly desperate Crêtans, who are making us all thrill with the story of their valor and their wrongs. What a Spartan affair "that of the Convent." The old blood will tell. I believe that Greece, and the Islands, have a revival close at hand for them—'tis *their* turn now—and with Italy will renew the cyclic grandeurs of the Past. My soul goes out to the Candians—they have lit a beacon, and the Peloponnesus may soon hoist a responsive light. A smart war with the Turks would do more to unite the different factions in Greece and give them a sense of *nationality*, than a dozen foreign Kings. . . .

Stedman's sympathy for this insurrection is expressed also in his poem *Crête*, which, however, its author felt to be "stilted."

At the annual meeting of the Century Club, January 12, 1867, Stedman was elected to the Committee on Art and Literature. February 6, he received and declined an invitation to deliver, at its next Commencement, a poem before the Dartmouth College Literary Society.

Hearing Booth's *Shylock*, he made a criticism which may be of interest: "Don't like it—not the noble rage of Shakespeare's Jew, but the hate of an old clo' man. Scenery and costumes superb and faithful to history." Previously, witnessing Ristori, as *Elizabeth*, he says: "It was a grand performance, and Booth, who had never before seen Ristori, was greatly impressed, and unreserved in his praise."

To his friends Stedman maintained his plucky cheerfulness, but his business affairs were tangled; he was surrounded by trouble and loss, which forced him to devote time and strength to Wall Street; although he still managed "at cost of eyesight and health to do a little on Theocritus in the evenings." His sensitiveness concerning his fealty to his vocation is shown in a letter which he sent to a New York editor, in whose paper there had appeared an item stating that Stedman had "forsworn literature for a time and was a broker in Wall Street."

March 23, 1867.

I shall dread to meet an editor, if such items as the above are the result of being called to his mind. You don't know how much—however kindly intended, they may mortify their subject. The whole *aim* of my humble life is my art—literature—and I would and could no more "forswear" it than forswear my wife, or my truth and honor, and this statement pains me as much as would one to either of the latter effects. The fact is that I never worked so devotedly at letters as this Winter—every night, till midnight, after my day's labor down town, preparing matter for future publication. Have kept thus at work and out of society, all Winter. Ever since you have known me—i. e. since I left daily newspaper-life in 1864—I have depended upon brokerage to earn that bread-and-butter for my family which I'm not willing to earn by sensation-writing or lecturing. In the Spring I shut up shop and go to the country to write, etc., until another Winter. This I am now doing, as I told you yesterday, and am, in fact, "forswearing" business, not literature.

Excuse this egotistical note, which is called forth only by your hastily-written item. The latter, of course, will have to go on its rounds—as any correction would give too much importance to a small affair—and I merely write this to let you see how tenderly a man who loves his art regards his own connection with her. I can truly say that I have given up health, property, everything else—that I might now and then snatch a few hours with my own beloved Mistress.

To Bayard Taylor.

New York, April 7, 1867.

. . . I never received, nor read such a letter as this of the 11th March, which came last week, and the contrast between your life and mine since we parted, is as wide as the distance from topmost sky to nether hell. . . .

Your enchanted ten days in England are enough to redeem a lifetime, and you could not be called unfortunate, if you should die to-morrow. Such a peerless night as you spent with that greatest poet, Tennyson, is worth the 1001 of Arabia—concentrated by the Liebig-Arctic-meat process. One thing when the Titan of Idyllists read you *Hylas*, why didn't you remember to find out whether he is familiar with the whole of Theocritus, and especially whether he studied the text in his *curriculum* at Cambridge? For various reasons I would give a deal to be sure of the latter point.—Looking at his portrait, it always reminds me of you, especially in the droop of the eyes, the curve of the nose, and the generally Oriental type of face and form, and I don't believe that two men so near alike physically, and so much in mental sympathy, ever before sat up to each other over wine and the poets. Stoddard and his wife are greatly—immensely—I may say—interested in your Swinburne letter, and think you are quite carried away by his magnetism. It seems, to me, though, that you found him about as you expected to, and your vivid description of his strength and weaknesses leaves at least as painful as satisfying an impression on my mind. How did you intend to have it? I do not think him so great a man—so noble a fellow—as Shelley, though his poems have the same abandon and rhapsody. But in philosophy he seems to stand just where Shelley stood in his sophomorical *Queen Mab* period. In Shelley's later years he was pure, etherial, lucent—gifted with broad sympathies and the self-poise of manhood? Will Swinburne ever attain to the former or latter. Your portraiture of his "tricks and manners" is that of a Fitz-Hugh Ludlow sublimated by real genius.—However, the Stoddards are very happy in their interpretation of your letter, and you could not have pleased Richard so much in any other way, for he is strangely attracted Swinburnewards.

Your letters arrived Saturday, March 31st, and we exchanged them at the Century. Jas. T. Fields was there, and expressed a great wish to read mine at his leisure, so I let him have it over night—there being nothing in it which he should not see. Cranch also read it—you may be sure we thought and talked of you *in extenso* that evening. For one, I consider your success as dear to me, as my own, and rejoice with exceeding content that you have so fairly won your unquestionable place in old Mother England's guarded but reposeful and nutritious bosom. Long may you suck thereat and may I also lay hold of one of those poet-fostering teats!

Since you left I have been able to work, without exception, four hours a day, or, rather a night, on my translation, having no friends nor foes to prevent, and determined not to lose the Winter entirely. Have nearly finished my *drudgery*—i. e., the text-verification, notes, and *prose*-version [Theocritus]. Shall be through with it by May 1st, if strong enough. *Io Triumphe!* I thought t'would take till 1868. Hereafter the work will be delightful, and I can go at it when I choose, without lugging fifty volumes about the country. My health has rather run down with this steady labor, and my chest is so sore I can hardly sit at the table; but three day's fishing, if I get no worse, ought to strengthen the muscular tissues. We talk of going for the Summer to Milford, Pike Co., Pa. (Pinchot's Place) and are now skirmishing with that intent. Dear me! how purblind we are! I might have lived at ease this Winter, loafed like a gentleman, gone into society, kept my health, and—saved four-fifths of what I have lost by being *industrious* in Wall St. So much for schoolbook maxims. "Be virtuous and you'll be happy!" It's a yarn—a fallacious Franklinism, and I'm sick of it. . . . The magazines and papers have absolutely nothing in them since you left. There is an abortion of an iron-bridge across Broadway and Fulton St., not a light aerial gallery, golden-railed. Gifford has painted me the most beautiful dreamy wood-and-water picture you ever saw, and at half his price. It hangs on the South side of my room and lights up the whole scene. Should I not have your Acropolis varnished over?

By the way, (you see the leading topic with me is as recurrent as the German Student's thirty guilders (?)) don't forget to order for me and forward *with bill* (through the New York correspondents of any European house) any and every book you see, of use to me, bearing upon the poetry, manners, art, etc., etc, of the Syracusans. You may come across something I wouldn't think of, and not accessible at the Astor or anywhere in America. Prof. H. L. Ahrens, of Leipsic and Hanover, is preparing the third volume of his great edition, to contain his essay on the idyllic poetry, etc., etc., and if it appears while you are over there, you may notice the fact and let me know.

> . . . Remember me to Faust and, by the way, tell Mephistopheles that if he will rejuvenate *my antique* and worn-out body, and give me [the] strength my youth should own, he may have my soul for a song, and much good may it do him!

A charming idyl is attached to the picture which Stedman with such delight has just mentioned. The story of it was told by Colonel William Conant Church at the Memorial Meeting to Stedman in 1909.

"My last conversation with Mr. Stedman," Colonel Church said, "I remember with great pleasure. He was at my house one evening, and as I came down to greet him I found him standing in front of a picture painted by Sanford Gifford. Stedman asked me where I got that picture, and he said that it had been painted by Gifford especially for him. He and Gifford had been old friends, and one of his poems had been inscribed to Gifford, who painted this picture, which had passed out of Stedman's hands. Mr. Stedman said he would write me a letter in regard to it; a courtesy such as a loyal and obliging friend, he always was ready and anxious to show.

"He sent me the letter, and a few days later he came down to my office bringing a little memorandum book in which he was accustomed to enter his daily transactions of life, his expenditures, and so on, a sort of diary, and he went over it in a search for his entry in regard to this picture. As he did so the recollections of his life seemed to come up before him and he alluded to this circumstance and that, with which we were both familiar."

Following is the letter to which Colonel Church refers—one of the very last that Mr. Stedman wrote by his own hand: it is sent from his last residence 2643 Broadway, New York City, dated January 8, 1908.

> You saw my surprise and pleasure when I recognized on your parlor wall the beautiful and characteristic landscape, cabinet size, by Sanford R. Gifford, which he finished up for me from the original sketch made for his larger picture of the same scene—an effect of wood and stream on his favorite Upper Bronx.

We always thought Gifford's fondness for making finished cabinet paintings from his first sketches most fortunate, as they often surpassed his larger canvasses. I consider the painting you now own, which I was loth to part with forty years ago, one of Gifford's best. He thought so himself, and gave it extra care, for my sake.

I have still my private expense-books of that time. They show that I bought the painting on March 16, 1867, for two hundred dollars, and that I possessed it but a year and a half. In the Fall of 1868, reverses led me to sell my first collection of pictures, the Gifford with the rest. Snedicor, an art-dealer of that day, sold it for three hundred dollars to a Mr. Smith—a well-to-do friend of the Stoddards—Mr. Snedicor's commission of about 15% was $40., and I received from him a net return of $260. It came in "very handy," but I long mourned the loss of my favorite small landscape. Am glad it is at last in the keeping of a life-long friend.

To return to the life of Stedman forty-one years ago: After a skittish market, he closed his Commission business March 30, 1867, remarking, "It takes all my means to pay my contracts, but I can now hold my head up." In May he went with his family to Pennsylvania, where his health soon bettered from life in the open; his elastic nature being quick to rebound with renewed hopes. "It was a great mistake," he says, whimsically, "that I was ever taught to read—as it spoiled a good fisherman and made a poor man of the world." Of these days, he writes to Taylor:

MILFORD, PIKE CO., PA., June 17, 1867.

. . . It's good to hear from you, especially up here in this most benighted and copperheadish "Pike" region of your own state, where every prospect pleases and only man is vile. We have been here a month. What I came for I don't know, except that I had no home in N. Y. and didn't know where else to go. So—with my mind all the time on the trout-streams hereabout—I persuaded myself easily that 'twas my *duty* to come up here and recruit my strength and think what to do in the future.

There are 100 cascades within ten miles, from 15 to 150 feet in height: the most wonderful region, for *beauty* of mountain gorges and brooks, yet found in my wide travels throughout the States, and I am surprised that 'tis so little known. The same cold and unseasonable weather which you have had on Lake Geneva, left us indoors here for a fortnight, during which I wrote sundry little poems, but since then I have passed days in the wild wood ravines, climbing over precipices and wading brooks and have caught hundreds of fine trout, and am pretty brown and hearty "for me." Am now brought face to face again with the bread-and-butter question . . . but have nothing decisive or hopeful to communicate, so I'll e'en hold my tongue. Shall work out my own salvation somehow. Probably, after all, the *gentleman* predominated over the art-feeling in my early habit, and so my wife and children *shall be cared for*, whether my creative mission is fulfilled or not. I do wish that I had the heartlessness (?) or faith (?) to let them and myself trust to luck or friends for a living and give myself up to art alone. It's a happy temperament that can keep owing and borrowing without scruple. Heavens! I am such a fool that an obligation of $5 will keep me awake o'nights! But this much of ourselves.

Swinburne's song of Italy is the most musical and sustained lyrical outburst of the period. I never read such wonderful alliterations of sense and sound, and such combinations of adjectives, attributes, interflowing lines—all surcharged with high and splendid imaginings. But his philosophy, under it, is crude and jangled, and he indeed needs a calmer strength to keep him company and give him aid.

. . . .

John Hay is sent out to Austria in Motley's place! He is a good fellow and I am glad he's in luck. Elizabeth's novel is done, and Dick says it is more powerful than her others. Carleton offers to publish it. I urge them to say No, and go to Loring. Howells and Aldrich have some things in the next (July) *Atlantic*—What, I know not. Am quite out of the literary world, but working and biding my time. It may yet come. I cut out an advertisement showing what it is to have apostles, as had Socrates, Confucius and Christ. What did they say in Paris of L. Thompson's Napoleon? Are you yet working at Faust? Dear me! shall we ever all be together again, and at peace, and at work? Perhaps our children may. God bless you all.

The middle of September at the height of a magnificent

Fall with "golden nights and days," Stedman resolved, as his means were nearly exhausted, to go back alone and at once, to New York, to see if he could find some more congenial business opening than formerly. "I have been trying," he says, "for fifteen years to follow my loved and chosen profession, and am just where I started, owing to the necessity of first being true to my dear ones, and with ill-health, and the times we live in." Back in the city again, in the hurry and fret, while he sought the solution of his problems, he commenced a long poem—"The Blameless Prince," and, in the glory of his beloved October weather, forgot his anxieties in such lines as these:

No clouds are in the morning sky,
  The vapors hug the stream,—
Who says that life and love can die
  In all this northern gleam?
At every turn the maples burn,
  The quail is whistling free,
The partridge whirs, and the frosted burs
  Are dropping for you and me.
    Ho! hilly ho! heigh O!
      Hilly ho!
In the clear October morning.

Along our path the woods are bold,
  And glow with ripe desire;
The yellow chestnut showers its gold,
  The sumacs spread their fire;
The breezes feel as crisp as steel,
  The buckwheat tops are red:
Then down the lane, love, scurry again,
  And over the stubble tread!
    Ho! hilly ho! heigh O!
      Hilly ho!
In the clear October morning.

Of his life and interests during the last months of 1867 he writes to two of his friends:

To J. Lorimer Graham, Jr.

75 East Tenth Street, November 6, 1867.

While I was trying to find some neat and economical place for our Winter quarters, I discovered that Miss Swift's *pension* corner 10th St. and 4th Av,—where Dick's rooms are, have been doubled in size by the erection of a new building, and that we could be more pleasantly located there than anywhere else at the same price. So we secured rooms on the 2d story, and *have meals served to us in our parlor*, so that we are very independently and comfortably fixed, Fred. is still in Connecticut and Laura, Arty and myself are again in town and side by side with the Stoddards.

You should have seen Arty's surprise and delight when he received your sealed letter, and his uproarious glee when he saw that it was from you and read its contents, and saw the clean 50c in notes. He spelled it all through himself, and when he had finished the tears stood in the dear little rascal's eyes. He is as odd and bright as ever—a perfect little Puck, but has a depth of feeling and sensitiveness about him that indicate real character of some sort. We pet him considerably—that's a fact—and we enjoyed your remembrance of him as much as he did.

I have been busily at work the past season on my translation, and on magazine poems. . . . But now I have put the translation temporarily aside, having commenced a long romantic poem, which you will be glad (I know) to learn that Ticknor and Fields are to publish next year. Their Mr. Osgood, to my surprise, offered to take all my poems into blue and gold, feeling modest about it, I declined until I should have printed one successful new volume through them, and not to lose the opportunity, offered to get one ready for next year's Fall trade, so I am at it, and if I succeed in the poem I have commenced, to my liking, shall make up a volume with that and my late miscellaneous pieces. As usual, this brightening of my literary skies, is accompanied by a lowering financial horizon (there's metpahor for you!) I am very, very, very, VERY poor. I am not yet in any business. . . . It is bad enough to have it keep me awake nights, so I'll bother you with this Jeremiad no longer. My only fear is that it will put a stop, suddenly, to all my literary work. My health is tolerable. So much for self.

Is it true that you are writing a book, the "Jimplecute?" I hope so: You have wit and humour enough to make a capital for a dozen of us writers, if you will only secure our unrivalled impudence of self-opinion and step into the ranks.

I forgot one delightful feature of our town-life, for which I am grateful enough. After twenty years of separation, my mother and sister are near me for the first time. They have taken Winter board at 215 E. Tenth Street, and we see each other constantly. It was all accidental, our happening, upon the same neighborhood, as I was meditating a Winter in Washington when they concluded to come here. . . .

I do hope Lizzie's [Mrs. Stoddard] book will succeed. She deserves success for her untiring and brave persistence and a little sunshine will make her more genial and happy.—The Stoddards' 15th Wedding Day will be Dec. 6. They have resolved to have a Crystal Wedding. Our rooms are to be the dressing rooms, Grand Combination Reception. Guests will bring their own bottles and tumblers. *Vive la Bagatelle!*

The Century is complete and beautiful. Last Saturday night (monthly meeting) the rooms were all open and brilliantly lighted. A splendid gathering was present. Fořner has returned and seems to have lost his American style without having mastered the French, at which he is aiming. He exhibited two small pictures. Gifford had three beautiful landscapes. (One a marine, to make a bull). Whipple of Boston was there.

What a thoughtful and persistent friend you are, Lorry. I am very grateful for your call upon Ahrens in my behalf, and it is of value to me to know when his next volume will appear. I expect some valuable aid also from Bayard, who knows better than any other man what to pick up in his Sicilian observation that will please me, and who is never tired of remembering his distant friends. He has an admirable letter from Duke Ernest's Court in to-day's *Tribune*, in which, for special reasons, I was greatly interested.—*Putnam's* magazine (new series) begins with December. . . . We are all delighted to have it revived. A flood of magazines! *Lippincott* of Philadelphia, will commence one in January. There is a great market demand now for authors, and I can have all the magazine work I can do. You see; but alas! a married man cannot live on it if he works night and day, I cannot afford to do it except in leisure moments.

The New York elections, etc., are just over. Sweeping Democratic victory. Timid time-servers say we must stick to our faith, but take Grant and conservatism. I say we have not been bold enough, nor hopeful enough, and that the natural law of reaction, and the blatant selfishness of our leaders, are the true causes of our defeat. Let the Republican party now take a fresh start on the basis of

1. Inviolable maintenance of the national good faith in financial matters.

2. Universal suffrage by Act of Congress, establishing one system for the whole country.

—Then, though defeated at first, they will grow and flourish, more rapidly and gloriously than in '59–60.

Good-bye, Lorry and Josie, and God bless you both day and night, until we meet again.

To Bayard Taylor.

New York, November 8, 1867.

. . . Your letter from Gotha (of a dinner with the Duke) has just come out, and I was very glad to have you draw Ernest as he is, having just read Victoria's constant glorification of his brother, *at his expense*. My attention has been called to the subject in connection with a long poem I am commencing which may be entitled "The Blameless Prince." Dwelling on the unsullied purity of Albert's character, and on the unanimous plaudits (now that he has gone) of the civilized world, the grief of the Queen, etc., etc., it struck me how *dramatic* it would be, if such a man as he, (say a medieval Prince), so married, etc., and bearing such a character in the sunlight of the world, had *really* a secret *liaison*, lasting through all his life, with some woman he really loved, etc., etc,—and from this idea gradually grew up the spectrum of a poem. I am merely giving you the *birth* of the thing. Of course the poem will have no bearing upon Victoria and Albert. Osgood wishes some long piece to commence the volume to which I allude in the other letter. I trust you don't neglect poetry. "Never neglect fishing, (says the angler), for business."

I had a *conventional* poem (*Feast of Harvest*) in the November *Atlantic*, but shall have a song, *Toujours Amour*, in which you will find more beauty, in the December number.

You speak of Whittier's success, "Snow Bound," etc. Holland has sold a first Edition of 20,000 of *Kathrina!* Ye Gods! . . .

One thing vexes me, and yet I protest that I have no literary jealousy. I wish to see the best work acknowledged, that's all. I observe that Conway has succeeded in getting into at least half a dozen English journals articles about Whitman—all of which take the ground that he is the American poet who is most widely read *in the United States*, and who influences most young Americans, etc, etc, etc. The *fact* is that we have never heard much of him save from Conway and O'Connor in America, and now from Conway in England! 'Tis a great thing, you see, to have one faithful and fanatical disciple. Whitman is a genius, but no artist. I appreciate his certain rich and rugged qualities, but he is very narrow in that *he* scorns all work but his own. Professed anti-bigotists are always bigots. . . .

In December, 1867, hearing of a serious illness that had attacked Bayard Taylor, Stedman wrote him a grief-stricken letter, to which he added some news of interest hoping to cheer his friend:

The Stoddards had their Crystal Wedding, as announced, and it was really a very delightful occasion. Our rooms were thrown open, *en suite* with theirs, so things were quite brilliant. A huge bowl of "Gotha Punch" was a central feature of the occasion, and we called up the spirits of its progenitor from its vasty deep.—Present: the McEntees, Gifford, Thompson, Bleeckers, Kinneys, Stedmans, Bullards, Pinchots, J. R. Thompson, Youmans, etc. R. H. S. read a poem to E. D. B. S. and the latter, *mutatis mutandis*, and I improvised some stanzas thereafter. You and Graham were missed.

The papers speak very well of your article No. 1 in the *Balearic Isles*—I think it the best yet.

Putnam's No. 1 makes a *fair* appearance only, but promises well. *Lippincott's* is not yet out. The Dickens readings are the sensation now. T. and F. have the elephant in charge, and the whole firm travel everywhere with him. Osgood has been very kind in sending tickets, for us at the regular price—the speculators buying them up at a great rate.

The *Nation*, which is cheaper than ever, and finds fault with everything which I do, at all events, has just made a hit with an article on "*Knickerbockerism*," in which it buries the entire Irving, Paulding, Cozzens, etc., School.

My affairs are unchanged for the better. Don't seem to have any material friends here nowadays, and am poor enough. Have been writing pretty vigorously, not to waste the time, on the romantic poem I spoke of. Have done about 500 lines in the last month. Shall finish it in about 1200.

Dana's new paper will start about January 1st. His building (Tammany Hall) is splendidly remodelled and I think he is going at the enterprise in a business-like way.

The last note in Stedman's diary for 1867 is characteristic: "So ends a year of poverty, struggling, and little done, with plenty of ill-health as usual. Took Freddy to Wallack's this night, with my last $3. to see 'Oliver Twist.'"

The year 1868 was a gloomy one. His plans for a salaried connection were unsuccessful, therefore on March 2, he borrowed reluctantly three thousand dollars from his uncle, William E. Dodge, and resumed his brokerage business, which prospered at first, but, as his choice of a partner was more kind than wise, in six months he closed the firm. Early in the year, he writes: "You see I am up to the eyes in business again, and it is very wearing and tearing, and entirely ruins my immediate literary plans and prospects. 'Needs must when the gentleman-in-black drives.' However, if my health lasts, I have faith that all will come out right in the end. I have been writing a long love-poem called 'The Blameless Prince' this Winter, and hoped to have gotten it ready in time for publication this Spring, but *had* to go into business when it was about two-thirds completed. The result is that at night I am too fatigued to write *poetry* and Ticknor & Fields think it will have to go over another year. It cannot be printed next Autumn on account of the political election—which is death to poetry."

There were three happenings of special importance to him during the Spring of 1868: On the 28th of March, he attended the Press Dinner at Delmonico's, where he made a speech in response to the toast, "The Poets of the Press"; April 9th, he acted as Secretary at the International Copyright Meeting; nine days later, he attended the banquet to Charles Dickens.

As a conscientious setting-forth of certain points, the following letter was sent by Stedman, on May 1, 1868, to the critic of the *Nation*:

Reading this week's *Nation*, I perceive your notice of my *Galaxy* poem as an imitation of Professor Arnold's "Thyrsis" and "The Scholar Gypsy." Will you acquit me of undue sensitiveness if I try to put myself right with a mind which I respect? There is no doubt that I read "The Scholar Gypsy," years ago, and enjoyed it, but I can now scarcely recall it to memory. "Woods and Waters," however, was laid out, and finished almost as now printed, a year before the appearance of "Thyrsis." The latter poem I read with great admiration, and referred to it in a careful note to an article on English Poetry in the *North American Review* for July '66,—but my poem was written in '65,—and I really can see no resemblance between the pastoral classicism of that noble elegy, and the Spring country-sickness which came over an American, who has passed many Summers in the woodlands of our own State. The *feeling* of "Woods and Waters" came out of my own heart and no other;—as for the metre and structure,—they were modelled upon those of Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale," if my memory serves me.

This note is marked "private," because it is written solely with a whim to be fairly understood by a writer clever as yourself. One can hardly earn time enough, after supporting his family, to compose at all,—much less, to know what is said about his work. Nor would I ever print a rejoinder to any criticism not affecting personal *character*.

You mention "Thyrsis." Much of that poem (as of Swinburne upon Baudelaire) was suggested by "Adonais";—much of the latter, in turn, by "Lycidas"; much of *that* by the marvellous "Epitaph of Bion"—(Moschus). The "Epitaph" itself is copied from Bion's own "Epitaph of Adonis,"—as are, indeed, all the elegiac idyls written since the Syracusan Period. All this you know, of course; but what a nice magazine paper could be written upon these successive elegies.

Now I am about it, (one is as rash as Hamlet at thrusting his sword through the tapestry of your impersonalism!), why shouldn't I say that I think you sometimes fail to criticise magazine-contributions from a right point of view. An author has a hard time, living by his pen, at the best; and the most conscientious and loving artist has the hardest task of all. He may be at work, patiently and lovingly, on some "sustained" and larger effort, and at the same time often be willing or compelled to sell those little sketches which, however complete in themselves, are not his important work, but merely the reflections of varying phases, etc. Now if, in selling these little money-getters, he is not tempted into sensationalism,—if he never betrays his sacred calling,—if he does no *slovenly* work, but finishes sweetly and carefully even his trifles,—he is not to be condemned, nor estimated solely by these trifles. The question should be—Has the writer of this lyric done what he purposed to do? Has he, on the whole, been true to himself, and also met the want of the publisher and public?—For instance—one day I heard a common, gross story told, which all have heard—of a man's never being too old to make love—and so tried to make "the violet of a legend blow" out from it, and wrote a little lyric, (finishing it carefully for music), called "Toujours Amour." Seeing that it had the popular element in it, I sold it to the *Atlantic*. It suited the public and went everywhere, and the other day, it was set to music in England for Miss Pyne. Now you, very truthfully, said of it that "it was very little to say of love, etc., etc." But if I had said more of love, or half that I could say, I should have spoiled my little lyric as a work of art, and gone farther than I intended. The song was true to its purpose, and did not necessarily contain all I knew about its theme. You should have spoken of it as a cabinet-picture, not criticised it as an attempt at any Academic prize-painting.

I have always tried to do no mean or sensational work, even for magazines, and believe now that I have kept several steps above the American or English average. And for myself, and other compeers, who do what they can in this material generation, with temptation, poverty, turmoil, all the while pressing against their purpose,—let me not only heartily sympathize with you in your own struggle to establish a high standard of criticism, but also beg you to remember that when you speak of our violets you must estimate them for their delicacy and quiet intent, and when of our Victoria-Regias—then demand that they be broad and self-sufficing.

But here—my intended three lines are five pages. I have been too long an editor to write letters to journalists, and scarcely know why I have written this.

To Bayard Taylor.

New York, July 22, 1868.

Two letters (March 3 and April 27) have been open upon my desk for a couple of months, and have afforded me much comfort in the middle of toil and troubles—your handwriting being a kind of substitute for yourself before my eyes, and reminding me that there were such things as leisure, companionship and joyance, once mine own. They are like the ring which a nocturnal lover puts upon the finger of a ravished Princess, in the Arabian nights, to assure her next morning that her vision was a reality. . . . Otherwise I might lose myself in present stagnation and disbelieve the existence of all things save worry and work.

To tell the truth, I have had very little heart to meet or write my dearest friends during the past six months, being something of a swallow and not liking to "come out" except in sunshine. Nor, after your return, need you expect any of my time and talk, till my affairs are in better order. Most literary men become like the eels, used to shining, but I am an exception, and *cannot* desire the proximity of the things I love, unless totally free from the "daily contact of the things I loathe." I am none the less rejoiced, however, to be assured from your own mouth, much-wandered man, that you are at last satiate of travel and coming speedily home to settle down among your household gods. It will be a delight to have you at hailing distance, if my craft be going to founder.

In the Spring we left Miss Swift's, May 20th, and took rooms in a new hotel-boarding-house, at Norwood, above Englewood, on the Northern R. R. of New Jersey. It is 21 miles from town, and I go in and out daily, and have not been able to absent myself from business a single day this season—not even to attend the 15th year meeting of our class at New Haven this day. Andrew White will be there, and other splendid men; I am horribly disappointed.

I had a chance to go into a very small brokerage business on

March 1st, and was forced to avail myself of it at once, though my Winter poem—"The Queen Regnant" [1]—wanted only a fortnight's work to complete it for publication by T. & F. in May, I could not get an hour's time and strength to finish it in, and it has got to lie over till next Spring—the Fall election will kill poetry, they suppose. This is cheerful. What adds to my vexation is that Morris has since printed most exquisite poetry in the metre I had used for this romance, and it will have taken the salt out of mine.—No words, however, can express my admiration of Morris's divine art and genius, and my gratitude to him for the happiness which his "Earthly Paradise" has afforded me. It is *the* poetry of the Century, after Tennyson's. He is a far greater, truer, chaster, sweeter, *stronger* poet than Swinburne, *me judice*, and his last book ought to live like the Decameron. Do see him in London and let me know all about him. I have not seen R. H. S. since reading the "Earthly Paradise," but I am sure his judgment will tally with mine.—You see that new and true art will make me enthusiastic, no matter how the world goes.

Well, I am now finishing up my poem, and trying, meantime, to meet my board-bills. . . . I suppose you will come home a real artist, by the creditable way in which you have studied, and I want to see what you can do. You know I have your *first oil-painting*. The pencil is to you what a trout-brook is to me; drawing you delightfully away from other work.

Stedman's overwork caused him severe suffering with his eyes and head. By midsummer 1868, darkening business matters forced him to send his wife and children to board with Mrs. Stedman's family in Connecticut, while he went into bachelor quarters in New York. It was characteristic that he arranged for their return in time for the anniversary of his wedding-day, November 2,—Stedman was peculiarly mindful of such tender ceremonies, rarely failing to make a yearly visit to the grave of his brother Charley.

In August, he agreed to put Rip Van Winkle into verse for Ticknor & Fields' illustrated colored series. "Would rather do it for grown people than juveniles," he says, "but must make one hundred dollars for Freddy's schooling this fall." September brought the signing of his contracts with Ticknor & Fields to publish his new book, also to reprint in uniform style his two preceding volumes, "Poems, Lyrical and Idyllic;" "Alice of Monmouth, an Idyl of the Great War, and other Poems." "They are pleased," he notes, "with Rip Van Winkle, and say it will be their guide and key-note for the others of the series." An item made in his diary on September 15, 1868, and a subsequent entry on the same page, may be of interest:

---

[1] "The Blameless Prince."

> Have prepared with care and sent to Ticknor & Fields a project for a great Literary Journal, to be called *The Atlantic Weekly*, and by them published in New York—with full estimates for expenses. If they will establish this and give me the editorship, I will leave attempts at business, and settle down at letters again for life.
>
> March 2, 1881. Looking over this journal, and referring to preceding page, I am reminded that at this time instead of starting the paper I suggested, Osgood against my advice, made a "pictorial" of *Every Saturday*. He afterwards had occasion to tell me that if he had followed my suggestion, it would have saved him $125,000.—I think that was the loss.

The end of September, 1868, Stedman completed "The Blameless Prince," which title did not satisfy him: in his perplexity he called upon Bayard Taylor for advice:

> I write in some hurry to-day to bespeak your immediate judgment as to the *name* of my poem! For good reasons I did not wish to call it simply "The Blameless Prince." There is no *name* of any hero or heroine in it, so that I *can't* call it "Kathrina" or "Lucille" (—nothing is so good as *one* name of this sort.) I finally hit upon
>
> *Dross in the Gold*
> The
> *Story of a Blameless Prince*
> With Other Poems
> etc., etc.

But the main title, though exactly expressive of the idea of the book, seems, when taken alone, on the back, too much like a religious title, "Wheat on the Stalk," "Foxes in the Vineyards," etc., etc. Now what do you think of

(A Court Secret)
The
(Story of a Blameless Prince?)

I like this myself: had proposed "A State Secret"; but the latter was thought too political. Among other titles I have had—a Flaw in the Diamond, (too Browningesque); the Queen's Choice; the White Mask; the Fair Mask; Pure Gold: The Story of, etc.; the Perfect Prince; the White Prince, (the latter name occurs in the Poem); Beneath the Mask; Prince Constant; Gold and Dross.

Can you hit upon any other vein for me? If not, what do *you* think of "A Court Secret"? The prelude to the poem explains why I have taken a foreign and medieval theme.

Mr. Osgood did not agree with the decision of Taylor and Stedman to make the title "A Court Secret." As Stedman considered Osgood's "trade-tact remarkable," he consented to retain the original title—"The Blameless Prince."

Stedman's quick sympathy, and his sense of justice, shines in a letter which he sent at this period to William Winter:

It may give you pleasure to hear me say that I have read with great delight your perfect little poem in the *Atlantic*. It is even better than one from your pen which I read a year ago, and that is saying a great deal. How have you worked out such an exquisite, genuine English style? Of the best period, too. I never think of writing my thanks to an author, and should not in this instance, were I not vexed this evening at the complacent stupidity of the magazine-man in the *Nation*. His laborious genius for saying precisely the wrong thing, as regards poetry, I have seen exemplified over and over again. Like Malvolio, "the cur is *excellent at faults*."

The dreary year was completed with a careful review of Lowell for the New York *Evening Post;* among other articles a survey for the *Galaxy* of "single poem poets," entitled "A Belt of Asteroids"; and he engaged with *Putnam's* to take charge of their Book Reviews, and privately to read their manuscripts.

From Bayard Taylor.

CEDARCROFT, December 4, 1868.

Hearty thanks for the *Post*, which (the article) I read with the greatest satisfaction. You have found the right track. I have always believed in Lowell, from the days when my belief was instinct only—have claimed his dues for him for years when there were few to grant them—and my present conviction is that he stands at the head of our literature. If he seems to be overshadowed by Emerson, it is because those who stand behind Emerson look up from a lower plane, and see the latter's head projected above Lowell's.

Nothing delights me so much as a criticism which is at once analytic, penetrating and sympathetic—which is the character of this of yours. The concluding intimation—in regard to the dramatic form—shows a very shrewd appreciation of Lowell's powers, and I also agree with your judgments upon "Fitz Adam's Story" and the "June Idyll." When I read "In the Twilight" (in Europe) without the author's name, I said to myself: "This must be Lowell, yet it is perfect music—and if not Lowell, Stedman has made a seven-league stride all at once." I have not Lowell's book yet, and your review first announced to me that it is his. Yet I also thought of you, as I said. Dick has sent me his *Albion* notice, with which I don't agree. While there is truth in his charge of ruggedness and occasional want of finish, he does not do justice to the splendid qualities of Lowell's genius. The article has a depreciatory air, which I am sorry to notice. Lowell has not had his due of recognition—and perhaps cannot have from the mass—and we, who know what he is, ought therefore to be all the more free and unstinted in our appreciation. Your review made my heart glad. If you do not feel free to send a copy to Lowell yourself, let me know, and I will send him mine.

I had a delightful evening with him at Fields'—he was very bright and cheerful. We also saw Holmes, Howells, Whittier, the latter also in fine spirits. The fine consideration these Boston authors have for each other—the reciprocal clash of intellect, without discordance—is a thing to be enjoyed the more, since we have so little of it in New York.

I shall be on again for the January *Tribune* meeting—just after New Year,—when we shall meet and further discuss matters.

From Charles F. Briggs.

I am truly obliged to you for the gratification I had in reading your criticism on Lowell. My only objection to it is that it was so brief. Let me suggest to you to take it as the basis of another article double its length, for the *Galaxy*, or *Putnam*. In doing this you will confer a benefit upon the public, for, though Lowell has been a good deal written about, and is loved and known by a good many, he is not half understood by the mass of readers, who do not know what a wealth of loveliness, of beauty, humor and goodness there is in his writings. Of course his character is greatly better than anything he has done. You make a subtle and just distinction between his verse and his prose, which I do not remember having seen before. His poetry is as distinct from his prose as Michel Angelo's statues are from his paintings. They both show the same master hand, but are entirely distinct. To have a perfect understanding of Lowell you must know what he has done which has not been published. His goodness, his humor, and his sweetness, are greater than his poems. . . .

January 2, 1869, Stedman resumed business in stocks. "No money but good character," he says,—"will try it once more." It annoyed him to hear remarks about his "going into business again." "I have made no formal exit or re-entrance from and to Wall Street," he writes, "have always retained my seat in the Stock Board, and a desk in my old office, though for three months I have declined all commissions and written day and night. Finding that my lungs were getting very sore again, and that the constant mental strain was too much for a disabled fellow like me, and a gentleman offering to put up a little money for office expenses, I have resumed commissions, under the old firm name. That is all. It is much better for me to work in the Street by day, and get exercise, and write for *Putnam* evenings. Shall do no more article-writing. The *Putnam* job is all I can undertake, and my book has gone to press.

So much for that. . . . Did you see my 'Belt of Asteroids'? It made quite a hit."

A pleasant trip to Boston in March, 1869, to see his publishers broke the routine of his life. Of it he writes: "They treated me with hospitality in Boston, and Aldrich was specially attentive—going around with me, and giving me a most charming little dinner-party, at which Whipple and Howells were also guests. Aldrich made a most favorable impression upon me, by his constant flow of wit and his maturer ways and thought. On Monday I went out to Cambridge and passed an hour with Lowell. 'The Nightingale in the Study' turns out to be—Godkin! He was there, writing at a high desk, and stayed throughout my call. Was obliged to leave Boston before I could accept an invitation from J. T. F. to dinner; but they gave me a surprising 'lunch' on Monday, at the office."

On the 13th of March, Stedman's volume was published: it contained "The Blameless Prince," twenty-seven shorter poems, and two of his translations from Theocritus. He "affectionately inscribed" his volume to his friend, Richard Henry Stoddard.

> Rare knowledge of our sweetest Saxon lore;
> High purpose; friends, that love to seek thy door;
> Strong wings of Song;—what needs a poet more?

With the publication of this book, which was reviewed at length, far and wide, he was auspiciously set before the public. "It only now remains," says the New York *Evening Post*, "for Mr. Stedman to pursue consistently the literary walk he has entered upon to the wreath that awaits him. In poetry every new comer is an unlicensed intruder. He must show his right of admission, he must approve himself worthy, or he will be summarily ejected from the enchanted realm. Mr. Stedman has established his right, and his future poetical career now rests with himself."

And from the *Independent:* "Mr. Stedman proves himself by this volume a true poet. The poetry of imagination, of thought, of description, and of sound, are all here. 'The Blameless Prince' is a beautiful, touching, and we think quite original story. Were it a mere prose narrative it would charm every reader possessed of feeling and taste. But it is full of genuine poetic fancy, and it is moulded into verse the most melodious and musical."

CHAPTER XV

BUSINESS NECESSITIES AND LITERARY IDEALS

1869–1872

To Ella B. Woodworth.

IRVINGTON, NEW JERSEY, May 2, 1869.

I will not let Sunday go by without writing you the letter I have tried to write so often, and have owed you so long. Your two affectionate "missives" are before me, and you know that—rough and hasty as I am in outer life—there is a private chamber in my heart to which my dear little sister always has the key. (P. S. and knows how to use it, too.) We are all safely moved to Irvington, where we live with my partner's family. The Selmsers have two little girls,—one eight years old and one a baby,—and we have two boys, you perhaps know,—so that the house does not lack for children. It is a little cocked-hat concern, but with a nice garden and plenty of fruit. Please tell your father that there have been three messes of asparagus, from the bed, upon our table already. Fred. goes to High School in Newark. He keeps hens, and really shows some animation about them. If "attractions are proportioned to destinies" he ought to be a farmer. Arty romps with Blanche Selmser.

Having got over the terrible job of moving our traps here, and moving our offices, and also having read proof of June reviews, I feel at ease to-day and am resting myself by writing my pet, and critic-in-ordinary. The author's thanks for the review in the *Transcript:* I see that you say Mr. Stone wrote it, though I observe certain points in it which read as if suggested by some one closely informed of my ideas and mode of work. It is very gratifying to me, because one does not often get too much honor in his own country, and the Connecticut press generally take me down a little; besides, it is admirably written, and justly, I hope, defends the moral purpose of my poem. I was much amused with the screed in *Zion's Herald*, yet the opinion—also expressed by the *New York Observer*, may mislead hundreds of very worthy people. The more able religious papers, like the *Independent*, take your view of it. Did I send you a *Home Journal*, with an absurdly long, but very well written, review? If not, I will. The book has been reviewed at great length, and far and wide, but I don't think it has sold very well, the season having been so dull. Such books as Murray's "Adventures in the Wilderness" are selling though. Poetry is a plant of slow growth in the *popular* heart. I wish, if I ever write another poem, to have it a philosophical, dramatic and also idyllic, New England story,—but can't get hold of a theme. Can't you invent one? As good in its way, it must be, as that of "On the Heights." This makes me think to say that I am reading Auerbach's new novel, "The Villa on the Rhine," and that it is *great* in its way, but even longer than "On the Heights." Shall notice it for July *Putnam*. Would you like to have me send you the paper edition by mail? It is in four parts. Give my regards to Mr. Stone, and thank him for his defense of "The Blameless Prince." I should be sorry to have him think poorly of my heart, no less than of my head.

We actually missed the *Aurora*, though in the country, with windows on every side! Absurd! But I saw that of 1859.

How is *your health now;* and how does Martin get along? If you had "Peggy" now, she would be an accession, though dogs are going mad hereabout. Say to Martin that yesterday the old Regular Stock Exchange voted to admit the Government Board men as members, a splendid piece of good luck for me, as the admission fee is $10,000 to outsiders. With care, it will make our fortune.

In 1864, Stedman had become a member of the Government Bond Board, and of the Mining Board in 1865; now on May 3, 1869, he was admitted to the Regular Stock Exchange Board. He mortgaged his seat, borrowing one thousand dollars from his uncle, William E. Dodge, to pay the fee. "This was the turning point of my life," he says, "as regards the question of subsistence. A marvellous piece of sheer luck, owing to my having paid one hundred dollars to join the old Bond Board." Following his admission to the Stock Exchange, he worked very hard on business matters all day; in the evenings writing in his pleasant little study at Irvington, which he had "filled" with books.

The end of May, he writes: "The house of E. C. Stedman & Company has had a successful, but most arduous week, so much of both that I feel the necessity and ability to resign my position as Literary Editor of *Putnam's Magazine*, and have come to that conclusion to-night. Am now in the full vigor of mental strength, and feel like a man who has a strong arm, with no wall to build. In this country, and with my humdrum domestic and business experiences, whence the chance for passionate or strongly dramatic themes?"

He resigned his "editorial berth in Putnam's craft" on May 31, 1869. In refusing a piece of work which Whitelaw Reid, editor of the *Tribune*, offered him, he explained: "Even a trouting expedition—with me the great end of life—has been foregone. Don't think me the man with the Muck Rake. I should be a fool not to seize the chance of retrieving my fortunes—so that ere long I may sit down under my own porch, and work for you all day long.

"I am heartily glad that things have turned out for you as I surmised they would, and that the right man is in the right place.

"It is almost impossible for me to get away in the daytime, but some night, when I stay in town, I'll drop in upon you. And we hope that, some Saturday P. M., you'll go over with me to our cottage and pass Sunday. Strawberries seven inches around!"

July 6, 1869, there is this note in the diary: "To-night, on inventory we find that, after six months of the hardest and sharpest work I ever have known, everything else being thrown aside, and all pleasures and nobler toil forgotten, we have made—our living, and a profit of only $1500. (cash and furniture) besides. Will try to the end of the year, and take things easier then, rich or poor."

In August, 1869, Stedman, who had hungered for the companionship of a daughter, suffered a deep grief; of it he writes to Bayard Taylor, August 17, 1869:

This morning Laura, after a dangerous relapse, is again better and, we think, out of danger. Have come to town to-day, after a fortnight's sleepless care and anxiety, and am very glad to receive your brotherly letter.

It is a great disappointment to us that we have lost our baby, (it was a beautiful little *girl*). . . . But when Laura was at the lowest, I resolved that if her life should be spared I would think nothing of the losses.

Glad that you are still heartily at work. Some time I may get into Arcadia again, but at present every energy is devoted to the question of material sustenance. It does seem as if I never should get ahead, again.

I have not seen Lowell's review, nor heard of it, but suppose that it must be in the *North American*. Am interested in your remarks upon the German hexameter, but should think that any measure which did not vary the feet and pauses in successive lines would be insufferably monotonous. If I ever do finish the [Hebrew] pastorals, they will be in a kind of hexameter of my own—calculated to most adequately represent the original, according to my notion.

Piatt's poems are appreciatively reviewed in the London *Athenæum*. Good.

Although Stedman had entered the Wall Street arena again hopeful that he could make sufficient money to enable him to devote his time to literature, the desired amount was very slow in coming, and he was finding his life still "a dreary, monotonous slavery." September 23, 1869, he writes: "Just as I had made up my mind to quit business *entirely*, fortune and most terribly hard work have turned the ball *a little* in our favor, and we are tempted with just enough success to tantalize us into one more effort."

Two days later, he wrote to Whitelaw Reid: "When a leading Gold Bull went crazy yesterday, and kept repeating his bid for 'any part of 5,000,000 at 160,' long after the price had fallen to 135, I saw in it the text for a grotesque satirical poem upon the Gold crisis. If I can possibly get time, I will write it—if it don't slip away from me—between this and Monday P. M. Should you like to bring it out conspicuously in the *Tribune* for Tuesday, if it chances to be written and fairly written, and to buy it at a moderate price? I will not promise that it shall take like the 'Diamond Wedding,' but the topic is in everybody's mouth, and it will be well read in Wall Street—you may be sure. Please send answer to-day, if possible."

Stedman's portraiture, drawn forty-one years ago, of the leading Gold Bull, Israel Freyer, might serve as a prophecy of to-day:

> Hearing the bid of Israel Freyer,—
> That ominous voice, would it never tire?
> "Five millions more!—for any part,
> (If it breaks your firm, if it cracks your heart,)
> I'll give One Hundred and Sixty!"
>
> . . . .
>
> But it matters most, as it seems to me,
> That my countrymen, great and strong and free,
> So marvel at fellows who seem to win,
> That if even a Clown can only begin
> By stealing a railroad, and use its purse
> For cornering stocks and gold, or—worse—
> For buying a Judge and Legislature,
> And sinking still lower poor human nature,
> The gaping public, whatever befall,
> Will swallow him, tandem, harlots, and all!

To Bayard Taylor.

IRVINGTON, N. J., September 29, 1869.

I fully intended, instead of essaying my Magazine article on the American Poet, to have written you on Sunday, and also Georgy Boker. But having been possessed of the evil spirit, apropos the Gold Crisis, it would not out till I had played upon the harp of a thousand strings; so I passed Sunday A. M. writing a "screed" for the *Tribune*, and felt better. We have gone safely through the panic, and haven't forfeited our credit and good name, and had little else to lose. But when I come home at night, even if I do nothing all day, I am too exhausted—for some reason or another—to do anything more than hear the boys' lessons. To-day dear old George [Boker] came rolling in, before I had been able to write him about his "Königsmark," and I was almost sorry to see him.

Your August Pastoral was the first thing I turned to in the *Atlantic*, and I have read it twice and thrice with increasing pleasure. The sentiment is as good as, and better than, Clough's, and the metre a hundred times better, of course. Nothing can be more perfect in the *dactylic* way than

"Faintly afar in the depths of the duskily withering grasses";

nothing more natural and unconventional than your treatment of the modern "Greek" bather. Sometimes I think you grow tired and careless in the course of the long poem. There is one short line (of five feet)—"Born of my blood," etc. I want you to read Arnold's Essay "On Translating Homer," from beginning to end, and you may somewhat modify your dactylic theory. Kingsley's dactylic measures, however, in "Andromeda" are perfectly exquisite. Longfellow's are often noble, and sometimes namby-pamby.

I can write as good hexameters as most—can tell a hawk from a hernshaw—but not in *lineal translation:* you'll find *that* a different piece of business. Now to conclude: You must *not* put your *cæsura* at the end of the third foot in *any* case: e. g.—"Sweetens the barren aridity,—" etc., but altogether, I like "The August Pastoral" better than anything you have done for a year. It is a sweet, successful effort in a noble and affluent measure.

To John J. Piatt.

New York, October 16, 1869.

Your good-natured note, with inclosure, brings you cheerily up to mind,—and I'll call you Jack again, 'an I choose, even as Poins and Doll Tearsheet called Falstaff, that Prince of good fellows and better fellow than his Prince. In fact, I have almost enough of the irreverent Yankee in my composition to say "Jim Lowell," and "Bob Browning," or "Hen Beecher," if you like. This may, however, remind you of the story of the Revolutionary Veteran, who used to pull so long a bow in fighting his battles o'er again. Describing his feats at the battle of Brandywine, he said that General Washington borrowed his musket, took aim, and brought down a British officer; and that Washington was so delighted that, when he (the veteran) addressed him as "General," Washington replied, throwing his arms about the soldier—"*Don't* call me 'General'! Call me 'George'! Call me '*George!*'"

I enclose a passage from the London *Athenæum's* justly laudatory review of your poetry,—though I suppose you have seen it. This English acknowledgment has given me the greatest pleasure, and I have carried it for some time and read it to many friends. If ever I can get time, I'm intending to write an article shewing that there is no use in writing poetry nowadays; but if one can't help making verses, why, it is well to have so just and really appreciative a reader as your *Athenæum* critic. He seems to catch the true spirit of your song.

My life is worthless as usual. "We live in hopes." The Freyer screed had a run, and hit the sense of Wall Street—which satisfied me. Of course it isn't a poem, but, poor as it is, I have done nothing else of late. Was 36 years old last Friday week and passed the day with my mother, for the first time in thirty years. How is your wife, whose torch seems to burn brightly still? The fact is that you both ought to live in the East. Then you might give tea-parties, like Alice and Phœbe Cary! And we would attend them. Have you seen Boker's book?—We are going to have a stilted and heavy translation of Homer, by Bryant, out this Winter, and all the geese are going to praise it. Bryant is too Latinesque to translate the swift and racy Iliad. He would do better with Virgil or Camöens. Never mind. Let the old Druid have a good time.

Notes in his diary show Stedman's continuing difficulties:

November 6, 1869. Had a week in our hateful business, to turn one's hair gray! What shall deliver me from the body of this Death? Received $172. copyright from Fields, Osgood & Co., only $52. of which comes from "The Blameless Prince" above the 1000 exempt from copyright! This will at all events clothe the boys this Winter.

10. Last night some burglars make a raid through Irvington, enter our house, give chloroform to Laura and myself and steal both our watches—mine the dying gift of dear Charley. It is enough to make one superstitious—such a succession of ills.

14. Wrote some trash "The House that Vanderbilt" for the

Independent—Mr. Bowen urging it and paying the liberal fee of $100.

17. Received cheque for $100. from Bowen, and an order to write twelve more such "poems" for next year for $1200. As if I were a grist-mill, or J. G. Saxe!

22. Finished "The Old Admiral" and sent it to the *Galaxy*.

24. Have written the *Independent*, declining the order to write 12 poems for $1200., though I sorely need the money. If I have *any* conscience, 'tis with regard to my art. Cannot make a Tupper of myself.

December 4. Stayed in town to attend the Century monthly. Met Gifford, Thompson, McEntee, Bierstadt, Pollok—all returned from Europe. Pleasant time. The Richardson-McFarland tragedy discussed.

6. Bowen writes again for a New Year's poem offering $100. Can't do it. Am laying out my Hebrew Pastorals.

To Whitelaw Reid.

42 Broad Street, New York, December 13, 1869.

Some weeks ago a leader, upon the death of Commodore Stewart ("Old Ironsides") appeared in the *Tribune*, the title of which, "The Old Admiral" suggested to me a dithyrambic poem, which will appear in the *Galaxy* on the 18th inst. If you see the poem, and think it worth the while, may it not be copied in the *Tribune?* This is rather an absurd request to make; but I have lately written so much poor stuff for the money's sake, that I am conscience-striken, and feel desirous that what I have attempted of a better kind should earn me some redemption—if possible.

We are still in the country, skating, coasting, etc.

The one thing about poor Richardson's case which has sickened me more than anything else is, that an "autopsy" should have been made, and his stomach, bowels, and other parts exhibited at a lecture up-town, before a curious audience. Was this necessary? Could it not have been prevented. As Bill Sikes said—"Wot do they leave such objects around in sight for?" When I think of him, only a few weeks before, sampling wines with us at a supper, and full of splendid energy and hope—the whole business seems like a miserable dream. I am glad to see, according to the *Sun*, that the Old Man sticks uncompromisingly by his friend's memory, and dares to face the music. 'Tis a big feature in Father Horace's character, and his oaths are as pious as was Uncle Toby's in "Tristram Shandy."

To the Same.

NEW YORK, December 29, 1869.

Many thanks for your kind and valuable treatment of my poem. You set it well before the public, and that is what a man wants when he really does his best. There may yet come a time when "all these things shall be counted unto you."

Having been long convinced of the folly of writing to newspapers, I herewith do a very foolish thing. Nevertheless, it *is* demanded by the occasion, and so every leading man says, in these regions. Let me premise that I have no interest in Durant's welfare, nor has he any in mine. But I learned, long ago, to honor his *genius*, and he has not yet received his proper share of fame. Please read my letter, and print it if you choose.

To the Same.

NEW YORK, February 20, 1870.

Yesterday I sketched out a poem upon Cuba, which has haunted me for several days. Can finish it to-morrow, and the question is what to do with it. . . .

As to Cuba: it is evident that we are on the eve of a change in our policy at Washington and that the American people desire this. Now an article from your pen, edging that way, and this poem, will give the *Tribune* the appearance of influencing and directing such a change, and enable you to take advantage of the present very strong popular current.

To John J. Piatt.

IRVINGTON, N. J. March 12, 1870.

Having written poetry through all this "Snow-Bound" March day, until even the howling winds can force no more music from my Æolian, I'll occupy the only lawful rest-hour which I've had for a fortnight in writing letters to my dear friends—to wit: my mother in Florida, and you back again in Washington. I am, in truth, very sharply driven, not having had a *single* evening to myself since New Year's—with the exception of the few nights which I have passed at the Century and other dinners in town.

In December I entered upon a foolish, half-paid contract with Bowen to furnish one of my *Hebrew Pastorals* every month, then not having the first one written,—only the plan of the series in my mind. Soon as I realized what a steady pressure the work would be, I tried to back out, but he would not release me, and the poems *must* come, will-ye, nill-ye. Cannot send you copies of "Abraham in Mamre," and "Abraham lamenting Sarah," having none to spare. Am now writing a very long and important one, "The Wooing of Rebekah," my first experiment in "easy heroics," which I will send you when printed,—and you will scarcely believe that I could so carefully *finish* 400 rhymed lines, in a dozen evenings. Am surprised myself at the sure touch which experience and *will* have given me.—Day-time I pass in the Stock Board; am still poor and struggling; never see any more of New York life, up town, than you do. Take a certain pleasure in my work, and make close study for it—that's all. So much for my affairs. *Nunc meliora!*

. . . .

The admirable *Spectator* article hits the mark exactly, and gives me almost as much pleasure as it can have given you. The writer catches the true flavor of your poems. Taylor was greatly pleased with it, as support of his advice to you (he says) to work the home (western) fields. You must, I should think, at least feel as if you had appreciation. No other American poet, save Lowell and Longfellow, was ever so well understood abroad. I am glad, glad of it; and in my mind it shall cover a host of English sins.

Did you see my poem, and Reid's editorial on, "Cuba" and "Speak at Last," in the *Tribune*, early this month?

Parke Godwin has taken the editorship of *Putnam's*. The April number, out to-day, is an improvement, and as he is old and stiff in the joints, I am surprised at the real crispy quality of his miscellany.

Stoddard has been expelled from the Custom House. His friends are not yet determined whether to be glad or sorry.

Dear Piatt, I have so many and *prolonged* reverses nowadays,—of various practical kinds, which you must take my word for—they are literary, pecuniary, and what-not,—that I hardly have the heart to write anybody. My only good fortune is, that despite enormous overwork and trouble, my bodily strength has thus far been equal to my day.

Will you not remember me affectionately to the O'Connors, Bloods, and Polloks? As Paul says, "Greet the brethren which are in Laodicea." And as for you and your wife, "Salute one another with a holy kiss."

I wish you and she, and yours, could all drift this way, instead of back to Ohio, and go to work on the N. Y. papers. You could write editorials and "minor topics" on the *Times*, and she would at once be in demand on the *Hearth & Home*, *Bazaar*, the magazines, etc. You might take a little house in Irvington for $400. per annum, and live like the Babes in the Wood. . . .

To Miss S. A. Brock.

New York, June 30, 1870.

My delay in answering the letter which you were so kind as to send me has not been caused by a want of interest in the purpose of your forthcoming volume, or by any doubt that you will make a very unique and attractive compilation.

Yet I have more doubts than one of your easy success. It must be difficult to elicit from the American singers their own declarations of *favoritism* with regard to any of their lyrical offspring. If a poet be a true poet and artist, he strives thoroughly to express his every mood, and to make every poem he composes as perfect *in its kind* as his faculty will permit. Yet perhaps he never fully expresses his ideal. Hence one is at first moved stoutly to deny, as a father with regard to his children, that any one of his poems is more his "favorite" than any other. Each was sung as well as he could sing it. And anon—such is the arrogance and harmless conceit of poets!—he is reluctant to present any of his past songs for appearance in your volume, as they all seem nought in comparison with what he hopes to utter in the future. What can I do then, but—on the principle that "the youngest is always" the favorite—to present you with my latest, "The Old Admiral"; and, with it, a little idyl, "The Doorstep," which has been so kindly welcomed by others as to seem to give it a special claim upon the author's regard. . . .

When Stedman completed his first attempt at "easy English heroics," which he says are "thundering hard to write well," he adds:—"I may claim that the story of

Rebekah and Isaac has never been told so simply and truthfully in English verse. With my great pecuniary distress and critical business conditions, I should go mad, I think, but for this work of poetry. Yet it is all overwork, and aging me before my time. *Cui bono?*" Out of the idea of his poem "Jephthah's Daughter," projected, when he was eighteen, upon the model of *Bion*, his whole series of the Hebrew Pastorals grew. Occupation on these poems, and work in the Stock Market, which, after a period of stagnation, had revived, engaged him the ensuing months. With the May days, he writes: "The Spring weather woos me from the life of books to sunshine and song and blossom of outdoor nature." The Fourth of July was celebrated by the making of a Cardinal Punch for gathered friends; apart from this pleasant festivity, the Summer days were replete with drudgery, though it was with a bright spirit that he wrote on August 27, 1870—"We have had a successful six weeks, and are *out of debt* and $500. ahead. Single handed I have worked off a deficit of $2000. in four months. But my health—thunder!"

In September, 1870, he decided to move to a more comfortable home, and on the 17th of the month he rented, for two years, with the privilege of buying, a pretty house on Quinton Street, Newark, New Jersey. "Have put in our Winter coal," he soon tells his mother, "some groceries, etc. Have accomplished wonders in the way of getting affairs to rights, and am to-night writing in the library which will be our Winter room, as we cannot furnish the parlor at present. Have contrived to make the said library very convenient for my study. What I meant was that I have no 'den,' where I can put my feet up and smoke or ruminate, without fear of damaging anything. It seems like a dream that we are again in a pretty new house, by ourselves,—yet such is the fact. How on earth we are to pay the expenses of living in it, is more than I know; . . . Yet I feel jolly enough over it, and mean to wriggle through somehow. Mr. Keasby has sent plumbers and carpenters here, and fixed everything *exactly* to suit us, to the minutest detail, and given us no excuse to complain."

September 25, 1870, he was glad to chronicle that after work in spare hours for eight months he had completed "The Hebrew Pastorals." Such a message as the following from Mrs. Stoddard was enheartening:

> Comrade, I said last night that you were doing the best work now of any man of your age in America, and our memorable peers, Bayard and Richard, agreed with me. A scriptural poem I do not care so much for, as for one like the "Old Admiral"—but I felt that Abraham's bosom was not so bad a place after all. When I think of you I grow ashamed. I let my ailments, my griefs, the disasters of my life overpower me, you do not—you *battle* and I admire you.

On his thirty-seventh birthday, October 8, Stedman remarks:

> Have passed the fatal—to poets—37th year, and begin to think I am no poet: only a *poor*, gray haired, unsuccessful dreamer, trying to get fat by feeding on the wind. Am as poor as on my 20th birthday, except in the love of friends. Mother and Mary send me gifts; my wife and boys love me, and we are all in a hired home by ourselves—but O, how poor, and how precarious the future! And how my genius, whatever it may be, is cramped, warped, and gradually atrophying away.

Four days later, a forgery, amounting to $20,000. was committed against him. "By this last blow I am simply stunned, it is simply impossible to think or do anything but work." Writing to Whitelaw Reid, a few days afterward, he says:

> Upon the principle, I suppose, that the routine of habit holds fast in any crisis, I have read the papers, in spite of a great misfortune which has almost "knocked me out of time." I could not help noticing the great improvement in your money articles. Nothing could be better than the last two or three, and, if they continue as good, they must soon regain the old reputation.

We are slowly recovering our wind, but whether we will be able to raise the wind, or no, in the shape of getting our stolen money back, is a sadly doubtful question.

My dear friend, I am almost ready to give up the effort which I have so long made—to accumulate a little fortune, which might enable me to follow literature more truly and take an author's risks. For some years past I have been the arithmetical frog, trying to get up the well, and falling back *three* steps as often as I have climbed up *two*. Shall try it a little longer (*Vide* Bruce and the Spider,) and in the end may yet have to come to you for daily work. Rather dolefully yours.

To Bayard Taylor.

Clinton Hill, Newark, January 8, 1871.

The only moment of real pleasure which came to me upon the last day of the old year, was that in which I read your brief, loving and strengthening letter. It happened, at the time, to act upon me as green goggles are said to act upon horses, and made my shoe-pegs look like oats. Any other day it would have been no more than any of your always-brotherly letters, though when we write each other, there is of course something between the lines that no stranger to our common loves and hates, joys and sorrows, can understand. But that doleful Saturday brought me just one of those trifling disasters—in the shape of more pecuniary loss through a friend's failure—which sometimes gives the capstone to a whole pyramid of trouble. It unhinged me, and made all my difficulties through the year seem more irreparable—my treason to literature more traitorous—the pretenders more successful—the public more silly and heartless—Humbug more triumphant—the Past more useless—the Future less hopeful, etc., etc.,—than ever before. I finally started for home, in a sufficiently misanthropic mood, but drew your letter from the P. O. by the way—and there were a few strokes in it, which did me more good than fifty sermons; and though I don't like to drift into sentimentalism, (N. B. *continued* trouble will bring one, unawares, to drivel), I told Laura that I should tell you, when next I wrote, how much better on that occasion you builded than you knew.

You are right in one thing; and I rejoice with you, in the belief that your final achievement outbalances any and all misfortune which 1870 theretofore brought you—ay, and leaves a glorious "surplus" upon the credit side. For my part, I have a radiant inheritance from my golden-haired mother—if, out of ten equal adventures, nine are disastrous and one successful, the latter is full recompense. But your great and pre-eminent venture, to which all the rest were coastwise trading, made safe haven and orient returns before the old year closed. Perhaps I am not so generous and demonstrative as you—scarcely so apt to express to a friend and brother-artist my pleasure in his work; but the feeling which I have upon the appearance of your "Faust" is that with which one meets a bridegroom on his marriage-day,—there need be no stint to the congratulation felt in the heart. It is proper that it should come out, and I write to indulge my sacred fury. I think, dear Bayard, that I have written no letter, except on business, or to my Mother, for more than half a year.

"Faust" did not reach me until last Wednesday, when R. H. S. stirred up E. P. D. & Co., and it came with a pile of volumes which have been lying on their shelves—to my order—for months and months. Of course I have read through your work, text, preface and notes; and, used as we are to such effects, it is astonishing how much the text is glorified and "brought up" by the noble dress in which it herewith appears. Your Ms. is less likely to be improved on, than almost any other author's,—but anything *written*, even by an engrosser, is only half-displayed. So a thousand new beauties are visible on these superbly printed pages which escaped my hurried inspection of your text.—The translation is veritably a great work. I do not believe a better can be made, nor will any sane and able man attempt it. Of late, I sometimes fear that I am falling into an apathy with regard to anything beautiful or strong, and take no pleasure in *enjoyment* of intellectual spectacle; i. e. that I am too *distrait* to seek enjoyment, even of the kind most desirable to me; but I recognize your great triumph, your well-deserved and inspired success, and do pause to observe and *enjoy* the victory of my beloved friend.

You know that it is my great misfortune not to read the German; and, since the receipt of your "Faust," I have more understanding of Brooks', seeing by the light of yours that it is more literal and equi-rhythmical than I had supposed. But you have given your work "the one thing needful" to be added—the melody of the born poet and singer. This, after all, was the chief motive for a new translation. Mr. Brooks is amiable, conscientious, scholarly, a sweetly-*made* poet, (see his hymnology, etc.), but not "one of ours." No, Sir! The *feu sacré* was not congenital with him—it came by inoculation.

Conversely, I am led to accept what I should judge to be defects in your work, by evidence in Brooks' that you could not remedy them and also be conscientious. Here and there, your inversions and double epithets I do not like—and yet am satisfied that you have surveyed the ground thoroughly, and that nothing but an honorable self-abnegation has brought you to the point of offending your own sensitiveness of eye and ear. In certain passages, however, you are perfectly triumphant—as, for example, the chorus of Spirits, Sc. iii, p. 81, rendered in such wise that your self-doubt, (in the Notes), is merely

"a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain."

Another passage, of an entirely different kind, is the soliloquy opening Sc. xiv., which Brooks has done well, but to which you have added just the poetical strength and rhythm which are the only adequate exponents of the Master's thought.

But my object, now, is not to speak of beauties or defects—only, to express my delight in your work, as a whole—to say that I recognize (what you, as a poet and German, must well be conscious of,) that it is all that we expected, and a noble success.

The Preface, of course, interests me greatly—especially your thorough statement of our Canon—the law of fidelity to form in poetry. The invocation to Goethe, in German, is beautiful; this I can tell from what little German I know, from the ring of the lines, and more especially from the good translation by C. T. L. (Lewis, is it not?). The 4th line, 1st stanza,

Und singest dort die voll'n Litanei

is a real inspiration.

The notes are very interesting to me, as bearing upon the method of my own work. The great question with you, of course, was—"Out of the mass of material, what to choose?" And I don't find anything trite, pedantic, or tedious, in your annotations—those being the three quicksands to steer clear of. In a translation of *Theocritus*, to follow out my plan of a complete work, a method somewhat more copious than yours must be pursued—for reasons of remoteness, novelty in English, etc.,—but you have done just about the right thing with regard to a drama so widely known and modernly annotated as the First Part of "Faust." Probably your commentary upon the Second Part will be more extended.

To the completion of your work I look forward with increased interest; having read but one translation of the Second Part, and that years ago. It was an English translation in a large 8vo. volume, illustrated with outline designs—I think by Retzch (?). Besides, I know from the Choruses, etc., which you have already read to me, that it will contain finer and more varied specimens of your versification—that it is at once wilder, more classical, more Gothic. It will introduce me to a newer land. When you shall have finished and printed the whole work, my dear old Comrade, you can say, (if you never do anything more), with your Master, that your life has been a perfect gift—that it has had one rounding, at least, most suitable to your ambition and genius. But: if you choose, as of course you will, to begin another life forthwith, so much the better for us all, provided, you go on living it in this, and not the other, world. And so *Faust* will represent to you a stately dinner-hour, between the morning and the afternoon.

Now that I *am* writing a letter, perhaps it is as well to go on, and tell you something of myself. Since the completion of those Pastorals, last Summer, I have published nothing, and written little—rather, I have finished little, and what work I have done has been rather in a desultory and sketchy way, for me. Have made many "sketches," or notes for poems, as ideas have come to me; but have too much daily labor and business anxieties—not to say distresses—to do up anything completely. Besides, I am sick of being compelled to send everything to some magazine for the *money*, soon as written. Would like to lay by some songs, etc., to be incorporated in a larger book by and by. My Wall St. work *ought* to support me or to be abandoned, and for many reasons the latter alternative is not to be thought of just now. Let me say a few words (—you are the only man to whom I have written freely and at length—) which, if my thread of life should run out, before I have accomplished more of our proper work, would enable you to obey the impulse which I know would urge you to explain the conduct of your friend. Not that there is any special reason for it—my general strength and purpose are as strong as ever—stronger than I ever had reason to expect. Only I feel in the mood. . . . .

For one of my strength, hard at work every day of the year, and in a chronic state of alarm (business matters scare me—I never can get used to them—) I have accomplished a good deal, after all, in 10 years—but at such intervals that I cannot *consecutively* hold ground.

Have been lately—finding that I must have some diversion at night from daily cares and scares—and under recent troubles not being able to compose, found great relief in again tackling Theocritus after three years neglect of him. Have made a careful study, translation and commentary, upon the 1st and 2d idyls—long and important ones. The work has really been its own exceeding great reward; and I was much cheered and encouraged by Higginson's voluntary approval of my *Hylas*, in the *Radical*. *He* knows. Am much embarrassed by the lack of reference books, which my means just now do not enable me to procure.

I do not know, after all, as it is any great deprivation to keep out of print just now—the public taste being so utterly astray after burlesque, the grotesque, the transitory. I can do that sort of thing, as you know, and am daily tempted with offers and orders; but have sworn not to yield to it—and shall not follow Bret Harte's example, who every week, finding himself the last sensation, is coming out with a new parody upon his "Heathen Chinee." My rule is, to write a satirical or popular piece only when some new occasion brings it right out of me—once a year, perhaps. I recognize Harte's genius—"The Outcasts of Poker Flat" is exquisitely done, an original prose idyl. "Jim" is a real dialect poem, but most of his ballads, etc., are *not*, and no one is quicker than myself to know and delight in a good wilding lyric. However, Harte is a man of genius, and will not easily be spoiled. The worst of it is that every scribbler undertakes the same thing—to say nothing of some true men—and none of us hereafter will dare to paint *genre* pictures, for fear of counting in that crowd. I have had a dialect poem in my desk for years, called "Old Hankes," which now I shall certainly not print, even if I finish it.

The Boston house, naturally, drive apace every steed that wins a heat. But when a man's growth is slow, though sure, they don't make much of him, unless he is "in their midst." (That phrase is bad English.) They never ask me for anything, and have declined what little I have sent them. I have this last week hit upon a magnificent subject for a three-page poem, and know in advance that this time I shall do something good—better than, say, "Pan in Wall Street." But when done, I shall not have the courage to send it to the *Atlantic*. Besides, I don't want it to appear in late Spring, and I *do* want the money for it; and *Scribners'*, *Harpers'* or the *Galaxy* will use it at once, and pay me double what Boston would. My work is in steady demand in New York.—Well: we all have our troubles. They can't cheat us out of one thing—the divine joy and glory, the holy comfort, of art-creation!

Richard is himself again. Aren't you delighted? A good place under his friend McClellan, happy, healthy, writing industriously besides. He, Lizzie and Lorry, are coming Tuesday to pay us a little visit, and it will do us all good. Will not you, Marie and Lilian soon follow after. Do so, my dear Bayard, and let us renew the ancient rites.

The culmination of three months of hard work on 'Change came with the week of February 27, 1871, when there was a decided movement in the Stock Market, enabling Stedman for the third time in two years to work clear of debt. The anxiety and confinement of his hours brought back the illness in his head and lungs, but he felt only hopeful. Two months later he writes: "My business is good and we are enlarging it a little, but that Long Room atmosphere is sapping my strength daily. We are working like slaves day and evening. . . . I wish we could all be desiccated, not to be soaked out again till the year 1950. There will then be something worth seeing and doing. Good work, pure air and literature, will be recognized—the air will be navigated—there will be a Congress of Nations, and Kennett Square will be, practically, a seaport town. But I am now growing G. F. Trainish."

And, simultaneously, in "The Songster," Stedman speaks from out his heart:

> Would, O wisest bard, that now
> I could cheerly sing as thou!
> Would I might chant the thoughts which on me throng
> For the very joy of song!

Here, on the written page,
I falter, yearning to impart
The vague and wandering murmur of my heart,
Haply a little to assuage
This human restlessness and pain,
And half forget my chain:
Thou, unconscious of thy cage,
Showerest music everywhere;
Thou hast no care
But to pour out the largesse thou hast won
From the south-wind and the sun;
There are no prison-bars
Betwixt thy tricksy spirit and the stars.

When from its delicate clay
Thy little life shall pass away,
Thou wilt not meanly die,
Nor voiceless yield to silence and decay;
But triumph still in art
And act thy minstrel-part,
Lifting a last, long pæan
To the unventured empyrean.
—So bid the world go by,
And they who list to thee aright,
Seeing thee fold thy wings and fall, shall say:
"The Songster perished of his own delight!"

October 10, 1871, brought the great Chicago fire spreading a panic in the market. Stedman writes: "Worked all day—carried my house through. Sat up all night and finished an elaborate review of Bryant's Odyssey for the *Atlantic*." Making money by the panic, Stedman at once sold his interest in the firm of E. C. Stedman & Co. for three thousand dollars cash to E. R. McIlvaine. With the close of 1871, Stedman says: "Have got Selmser [his former partner] into the Board this year, and am now free with a few thousand dollars ahead, for the first time in five years, to try to make some money, so that I can write in the end."

He was extremely sensitive concerning acts of friendship, which he felt of late he had been unable to carry out according to his exacting ideal—hence, for this reason also, he welcomed his release from his commission business. His duties as a member of the Committee of Art and Literature at the Century Club worried him; although he had tendered his resignation, to that Committee, believing himself unable to command the time required to perform its duties, he had been reëlected for the fourth year of his service. As he says, in writing to Mr. Parke Godwin: "Since the Spring of 1870 I have resided in Newark, N. J., and have been compelled to forego our pleasant evenings at the Century, and,—what has weighed upon my conscience,—to neglect the ties of the Committeeship. Let me, however, plead in self-defence, my former years of faithful service—during which our present library and reading-room,—such as they are,—were established with the best means at our command."

The Summer of 1871 had brought Stedman a most gratifying occurrence—the outcome of the following letter:

New York, April 24, 1871.

Reverend Theodore D. Woolsey,
President of Yale College:

Dear Sir:

The object of this letter is to convey, through you, to the Faculty of Yale College, my respectful petition that the degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts may be conferred upon me; and that, if this request be granted, the diplomas may date from the years 1853 and 1856, as would have been the case had I completed my academic course.

In 1849, I was admitted as a Freshman, after sound preparation, to the Class of '53. For a while I stood well on the list, but, falling into irregularities and violating rules, I was suspended during the latter portion of the Sophomore year. In the Junior year I made application for readmission. You treated me with kindness, and laid the case before the Faculty, which body voted that I should not return to Yale, but that it would not be deemed contrary to the comity of Colleges if any other institution should receive me.

Without availing myself of the latter clause I went on with the studies of the course; but was fairly entered upon the profession of journalism at the time of the graduation of my Class.

After a period of twenty years, and at the request of many of my classmates, I make this petition, and would respectfully urge the following pleas in my own behalf:

1. I was a mere boy—the youngest in a class of over one hundred—during my probation at Yale. My father was dead, my mother residing in Europe; and I may say truly that, although under the care of a guardian at Norwich, I had not a single friend or adviser in New Haven; and that, from utter loneliness, trouble, and inexperience, I fell into the dissipation that drew me from my proper studies, and ultimately caused my suspension. In one department my course, perhaps, was satisfactory. The first prize was given me for English Composition, in the second Sophomore term. In the third term, it was again awarded to me, but forfeited by my suspension.

2. As soon as I realized my error, I resolved to obtain a higher culture, and to accomplish something that would gain me an honorable name and position. Since my eighteenth year I have studied and worked, dependent entirely upon my own efforts, and with others depending upon me; and believe that I may claim to have secured a reputable and useful foothold, both as a practical journalist, and as a critical essayist and author. These facts are only mentioned as a basis for my claim to the possession of the ordinary qualifications for the Bachelor's and Master's degrees.

3. I have been encouraged to make this petition, upon learning that it is not without precedent,—but that a member of my own class, who left under similar circumstances, has received the degrees as a recognition of his successful and reputable subsequent career.

Professors Cyrus Northrop, James Hadley and John F. Weir, and Mr. Donald G. Mitchell, all of Yale, are more or less familiar with my character and pursuits, and I am willing to abide by their report, together with your own wise judgment in the matter. But, in corroboration of what I have stated on this point, I will venture also to refer to my friends, Messrs. Bayard Taylor, Richard Grant White, R. H. Stoddard and Charles Astor Bristed, of New York; Messrs. Horace Greeley, Whitelaw Reid and George Ripley, of the *New York Tribune;* Messrs. W. C. Bryant and C. T. Lewis, of the *Evening Post;* Messrs. James T. Fields and W. D. Howells, of *The Atlantic Monthly;* to Professor Lowell, of Cambridge; to Professors Drisler and Joy, of Columbia College, New York; to Mr. S. S. Conant, of *Harper's;* Mr. Church, of *The Galaxy;* the Reverend Doctor Prime, of *The Observer;* and to Mr. Samuel Bowles, of *The Springfield Republican.*

I have not mentioned the subject of this application to either of these gentlemen, nor solicited any influence in my behalf. It has seemed to me more fitting to acknowledge, in person, the justice of the sentence passed upon the boy, and to make a straightforward request that the man may, at last, be placed upon a footing with his class-mates. I intended to defer such action until after the publication of my translation of Theocritus, but have decided to wait no longer, in the hope to receive from your own honored hands, before your official retirement, knowledge of the revocation of a sentence which you pronounced so many years ago.

I am, with much respect,
Your obedient servant,
Edmund C. Stedman.

Box 4090, P. O.
New York City.

In July, 1871, he received a letter from President Woolsey stating that the Yale Corporation had restored him to his class of 1853, with the degree of B. A.; also conferring upon him the degree of M. A. "It has taken me twenty-two years to get through college," the prodigal remarks. In his letter, President Woolsey adds: "I hope, Sir, you will feel kindly toward Yale College, and help to promote its interests"—a charge, which to his last moment, Stedman loyally remembered. And, in his Will, he gave to Yale his collection of rare and valuable editions of the Sicilian Idyllists, thereby bestowing upon his Alma Mater the volumes which held his long cherished, but never fulfilled Ideal.

October, 1871, writing of his *Tennyson and Theocritus* to Mr. Howells, editor of the *Atlantic*, Stedman says:

It seemed odd to me that, after the great interest expressed last Spring by Ripley with regard to that Tennyson paper, neither he nor Reid nor Hay should have had a word to say of it, and, in fact, that this number of the *Atlantic* should have positively received no notice in the *Tribune*. Last night was the monthly love-feast at the Century and a very full and brilliant affair it was. Hay, (elected last month) Reid, etc., were there, and Reid said—"What's the matter? Ripley and I have everywhere been hearing and reading of your article, and wondering why the Magazine didn't reach us. To-day, for the first time, we all received *Atlantics* for November marked 'Advance Copies.'" So you see that the mails are to blame. I think, however, that the paper has been very carefully read, as I heard of it last night from at least a hundred people, and it was very generally discussed. A great many business men, etc., also have talked to me about it. As projects of future work rather hinged, with me, upon the reception of that paper, I felt an interest—altogether distinct from vanity—in its reception—and on your account, no less than my own.

We had a regular "Ring" (New York style) of magazine and newspaper editors at the Club last evening—Church, Conant, Schuyler, Macdonough, Gilder, Reid, Hay, etc., and your connection with the *Atlantic* was talked of. All seemed to think that you would now make the magazine better than ever, and I am sure you will.

Am getting out of commission-business, to which I have been an enforced slave. Henceforth shall be only a speculator, to be frank, and a writer. You see I have time to write letters, but this requires no answer.

Mr. Stedman's views concerning the "only true mission of woman" were the same in 1872, as they were the day of his death. A letter, written in 1892, to a young girl, contains this advice: "I beg you will let me say that I am touched and interested by your revelations of the mind of a studious and imaginative girl, and grateful for your appreciation of my own talks about poetry. However much you care for art and the ideal world, don't neglect the *real*. Live your *life*, or when the years have passed by you will find that you have missed something."

In 1872, when he received the happy tidings of his sister-in-law's approaching wedding, he expressed his pleasure as follows:

To Ella B. Woodworth.

NEWARK, January 21, 1872.

Your late letter to Laura has been on my mind, in season and out of season, during the past fortnight, but until this morning it has been impossible for me to write you. However, you can't lay your little hand upon your large heart, and find any fault with other people for epistolary delays—or, as Everett will back me up in saying, delays of various kinds.

Well, my dear sister, I am, for one, thoroughly gratified that you have at last resolved to give your lover the reward he so well deserves, and to make both him and yourself happy in a woman's natural and only true way of life. You have *nothing* to blame yourself for: we all have long seen that you were a little hero, in your devotion to your parents, and in the pluck and steadfastness with which—while every chance was against you—you have, *wholly* by your own efforts, made your mark and achieved such results as few, though born to wealth and the highest education, know anything of. It has long been time that you should think of your own future, and of that wedded happiness which is every woman's due. You know well my ideas on this subject, and although I am selfish enough to be willing to keep you single for ever, for our own companionship and comfort in some future day,—I am delighted that you are going to accept your own happiness, and glad to confide you to a genuine, manly, aspiring, loving husband, like Everett Stone. I see a bright future for you both. Knowing, as I do, that Mr. J. I. A. Stone is as well satisfied with his son's choice as I am with yours, there can be nothing discordant in a marriage between two who long have been welding together their instincts, principles, and motives in life. No doubt your mother feels this, too, and during her recent illness, while we all have been so anxious about *her*, she has, I am sure, felt a new anxiety with regard to the happiness and future years of her pet-daughter—resulting in her perception of the right and immediate course for you to take. In your wedded life, you will find the natural outlet for all those vague emotions, half-purposes and instincts, by which you have been restlessly inspired, and will enter, upon a woman's highest mission—your apprenticeship fully and nobly served.

Congratulate Everett from me, and tell him that I think of him already as a brother.

It seems to me very important that you *should*, in spite of the seeming hindrances, make an effort to run down here for a few days, so that Laura and I can assist you in planning, arranging, and *outfitting* yourself for the voyage on the matrimonial ocean just in view. Of course, we have the right to do our share, and we want to see you so *as to decide what is best to do*, and make no blunders. The few days' trip will not hurt you. Your mother can spare you now—the *office* will *have* to spare you ultimately, and might as well begin to get used to it. Gird your cloak about you, and make up your mind to it, and *come*. It will be better in the end, and "where there's a will there's a way."

March 8, 1872, Stedman accepted a commission to deliver the poem before the Reunion of the Grand Army of the Potomac on the next seventh of May. "What shall I write for such an occasion that will not be old and commonplace?" he queries. An interchange of letters with Whitelaw Reid is characteristic, as many other letters prove, of Stedman's conscientious method of work.

New York, March 18, 1872.

Having got myself into a scrape by accepting a commission to deliver the poem before the "Grand Army of the Potomac" next May, and feeling that the office does honor to any American poet, I am going to try hard to honor the occasion by doing my best. Of course, 'tis the most difficult thing in the world to prepare something neither too high, nor too low,—too long nor too short—too old nor too new,—to read before the veterans: and, casting about for a theme, I have resolved to draw a battle-picture—"The Battle of Gettysburg." It was my misfortune, after being with the Army through its sorrows, to be absent from its first great triumph. (I took Wilkeson's place in Washington, so that he might go up to Gettysburg.) *You* were there: and permit me to say that, although I hastily read and admired your letters at the time—such of them as I saw—I never fully appreciated them, never realized how graphic, complete, they were,—until now, as I go over them consecutively in Moore's "Rebellion Record." They constitute the *best* group of battle-letters made up during the war, without exception. Certainly there are errors in them, as I see by careful study of the official reports, of Swinton's "Critical History," etc.,

etc., but it is a marvel how you could make them *so nearly* correct, in the glow and turmoil of the few days which they cover. They are beautifully done.

—Now, although I may not use a single *detail* in my poem, (not belonging to the Whitman-Cataloguing School), I never write poetry of this sort, without being wholly informed and brimful of the subject from which it flows. Can you tell me—First: whether the third day's fight was on a bright, sunny day? Second: whether the nights were moonlit? Third: whether the second day's battle actually raged *in* the cemetery—i. e. did Ewell, or his fire, get in there, so that our killed and wounded lay around among the graves, etc.?

To Bayard Taylor.

Newark, May 2, 1872.

I owe you thanks for your thoughtfulness with regard to the list of Sicilian plants, as it was carefully prepared and will save me some labor, should I ever seriously endeavor to complete my work.

So you are really going abroad! I had not realized that you were so near your departure, and hereafter shall feel more alone than ever. I hope that your rent will bring you enough to make your income more than comfortable. You are going just as, for the first time in three and one half years, I am out of commission business. In all that period, I have not been one hundred miles away from New York nor had three days consecutive "recess." Think of that, for a man whose whole nature is vagrant and nomadic. We are now going away for the Summer, *whither* I know not—but anywhere, anywhere out of New Jersey. To-morrow, I start for Cleveland, to recite the Potomac Reunion Poem. Shall try to be in New York, and to see you, about May 12th.

"The Masque of the Gods" came yesterday. As yet, I have only read the extracts in Ripley's and the *Post* notices: but have a good general idea of the poem. When you first mentioned it to me, I saw and said at once that you had hit upon a grand conception; with your characteristic rush and fire you have embodied it all the more nobly for doing it at a heat. I see in it superb diction and mastery of poetic rhythm and material; it is finely dramatic, and large. My *only* complaint with it is that you break in upon the magnificent unity of the conception, by making *Immanuel* the "*only* begotten son." He, although nobler, far in advance, of all the other deities upon whom men call, or have called, should also, compared with the *infinite*, unknowable *I am*, fall as far short as the rest, and be also left in doubt. As it is, you jar upon the artistic, and also the rationalistic or philosophic sense, and do not suit the Philistines, either. Christ, as you and I believe, I think, was the begotten Son of God; but not the *only*-begotten Son. Others may yet have grace given them to know that they are God-begotten, and to lift mankind yet higher. But the poem is a great one, and I am proud that you have written it.

Farewell—I go away sick and utterly worn-down. Do read my Bryant review in the May *Atlantic*. It is mine, though people don't know it, and the magazine don't half pay for it.

Within a few days, Stedman had leased the Newark home for six months; just as he was commencing his first recreation in several years he received a telegram announcing a serious disaster to his successors in business, the junior partner having absconded with the funds of Mr. Selmser. Stedman's private business had been left with this firm. In great fear and distress he returned at once to New York, where he "cleared away the wreck and got things into some sort of shape"; but the trouble cost him half of his reserve fund.

During his residence in Newark, he had become acquainted with a young man, his sister Jeannette, and his brothers, with whom Stedman was to share a life-long friendship: this young man was Richard Watson Gilder. Three days before Mr. Gilder's death, November 18, 1909, he wrote of this early meeting to the granddaughter of Mr. Stedman: "My first meeting with Mr. Stedman was in the office of the *Newark Advertiser*, on which paper I was employed as a reporter and correspondent—with known 'literary' aspirations,—getting to be afterward, managing editor. The paper was run by Mr. T. T. Kinney, step-son of Mr. Stedman's mother. I remember the breezy sympathy of Mr. Stedman's greeting. Later he came to live in Newark, by which time I was engaged in magazine editorial work. . . . He was interested from the first in every poetical attempt of his young neighbor, and in the beginnings of the magazine—then called *Scribner's*, now *The Century*—with which I was connected. As time went on, not only most of his poems thereafter written, but also all the volumes of his literary essays, first appeared in that magazine.

"Mr. Stedman was much interested in my becoming a member of the Century Club, almost next door to which I was living after my marriage. The club house was then on Fifteenth Street, New York."

Stedman's affectionate interest in the young editor, whom he grew to love as "a younger brother," is shown in a letter to Gilder, which also reveals how Stedman was passing the Summer of 1872.

PLYMOUTH, MASS., July 3, 1872.

Your letter, dated the 27th, by some delay, reached me not till yesterday. It is more than kind of you, Watsy, to remember me so far away and to send us your Magazine and all sorts of good-natured news. I am glad "The Songster" goes into your book, as I have a weakness for that poem, and it *is* a "song of Nature," after all. And I am particularly glad if you really take any pleasure in reading it, after an hour of perfection with that transmigrated Greek soul whose last earthly name was John Keats.—Not suspecting that you would be so thoughtful, I had sent all the way to Boston for *Scribner's*—as I am interested, young man, in watching your progress. So I have a spare copy for the hotel. The Old Cabinet is dainty as usual, and will make you a reputation by monthly accretions.

I wish you would run over here this Summer, as our guest. I have bought a little boat, and will take you over the yeasty waters. It is a wild, charming spot on the outer bay, three miles from Old Plymouth. There are scores of beautiful ponds, stocked with bass and trout, just inland. We are all brown and rugged, and with nothing to annoy us, but a nasty newspaper paragraph—to the effect that I am generally "broken down," in health, etc.,—when I was never so strong in my life, and am writing prose and poetry when not fishing.

Just before we reached here, I wrote a page, descriptive of the Pennsylvania trout brooks, to go with some nice illustrations in the August *Aldine*. Look at it, will you not? I have been compelled to decline other *order-work*, as I am trying to do something of a little larger kind, and must get ahead with it this season, or never. But if I *do* have a spare inspiration, I will not forget you. It will hardly pay you to send the books you speak of so far, and it might bother me to "switch off" from my work in hand. Thanks, none the less. Run over here, by and by, if you can, and don't forget it.

Remember me to Mrs. Dodge and to your sister, and let me hear from you whenever you feel like it. I saw Longfellow, Aldrich, Osgood and Louise Moulton in Boston, t'other day. Aldrich will occupy Lowell's house, during the latter's absence in Europe—whither (I presume) he goes to get over Wilkinson's critique. By the way, each of the last two parts was better than the first, and altogether the article is a strong one—almost unanswerable. Lowell's prose fascinates me, nevertheless,—probably because it is so poetical and unlicensed. Your man Wilkinson has brains and ought to have a future before him.

The life at Plymouth suited Stedman exactly: "I never was stronger in my life," he says to Whitelaw Reid, "writing, sailing, fishing, etc., from morning till night. . . . Among other work I have found time to write the first of a few letters—say five or six—which I should like very much to furnish the *Tribune*, partly for the column price, and partly for the purpose of breaking my hand in again to newspaper work. Of course you will be crowded to death—but you must have *some* sea-shore letters (as the Captain told Pendennis, 'You *must* have sherry') and so—let mine be the few you have. I know from experience what ought to go in a letter—Nordhoff's are good—and shall not make them all talk and no cider. Here, for instance, is the whole Massachusetts Coast in a column. Print it, and let me send you one a week during the coming month. Please write a line, saying that you will use them if I agree to let you kill any one that is hackneyed and uninteresting. And don't, amid your present climacteric season, forget entirely, your friend."

Mr. Reid accepted the series of "Old Colony Letters," which were widely quoted and praised. In the contentment of being at his chosen pursuit, their author did not fail to signal the work of a friend: hence, he writes on July 24, 1872, to Aldrich: "I have been reading your story in the August *Atlantic*, and cannot refrain from the unusual folly of telling you how very much I like it. My thorough enjoyment of its perfectly delicious and unceasing humor is only marred by vexation that I can't do such things myself. You have struck a vein of true ore in stories of this kind—in fact, your earlier prose sketches were 'leads' in the same direction. And I hope that you will not be deterred from vigorously working it. A 'Rivermouth Romance' suits my artistic sense exactly, and I find no flaw in it from beginning to end. Now you have, of late, fairly opened your valves, don't close them up again till all reading people have learned that you are a genuine pearl oyster (even if not gathered on the Pacific Coast)."

Stedman's objectivity is shown in a letter sent to J. G. Holland, in October, 1872:

> I have to thank you for your courtesy in sending me a copy of your new volume, and still more for the pleasure with which I passed last evening in its company.—Your life has, to a certain extent, been led in a different locality from that of my own and of my literary friends and associates,—so that it would not be at all strange if you were not fully aware of my own acquaintance with your writings and enjoyment of much that you have done. And, while my opinions are worth very little of themselves, they may still have an interest to you, as being those of a fellow craftsman in our one beloved art.
>
> Your former poems have long been on my shelves. Their popular success is great, and I am not one to undervalue the test of the popular judgment. "Bitter-Sweet" I always liked—both its name and motive, and many of its episodes: it always seemed to me very uneven in quality—and, no doubt, does to you—but nothing can be more truly poetical than the baby-song, and nothing more natural and idyllic, than the fruit-scene in the cellar; and the whole poem has that element of *spontaneity* which is the charm of an early work. Thus much I have always said for "Bitter-Sweet," among my friends; and, speaking now from memory, am willing

to reassert it. "Kathrina" is, probably, a more elaborate effort. I will frankly acknowledge that I do not consider the name a *natural* one for a New England poem. The book had an interest for me, because I was "rusticated" at Northampton, and know and love the entire Holyoke Valley. In criticising a work of art, the question should be—How is this done from the author's standpoint? Has he carried out his own purpose? How *is it of its kind?* Consequently I respect the motive and construction of "Kathrina," and "The Marble Prophecy," finding them noteworthy poems of their class:—the only true critic is a universalist, who pronounces neither the rose, the violet, nor the lily, to be the superior flower, but asks, How is this rose *as a* rose? How does this lily compare with other lilies? etc., etc.

And now pray give me leave to say how *very* much not only myself, but many other writers, admire such a poem as *Daniel Gray*. It is without fault, and the most perfect picture of an old Congregationalist ever drawn. I would give much to have written it. *Sleeping and Dreaming* is of a still higher type: an exquisite expression of the most poetical sentiment. None but a true poet could have written it. I have thus indicated what I like in your poetry, as that is all that one need say to another; but thus much should be said, if only to put men, who have not often met, upon an honest understanding.

Home again in Newark, N. J., stimulated by congenial work partially completed, Stedman felt that he was "rusting" in his "exiled" home. He was becoming restless for the society of his colleagues and he longed to be back in New York, where he could feel the pulse of the city. Also, in the distance loomed his fortieth birthday—to him, though in Life's morning—an ominous mark when he must be "rich, wise, famous,—or never." Recurrent in his letters of this year is a fear that before his vocation is accomplished his years of vigor and "the inventive period of life will be wholly passed." His mood is expressed to Bayard Taylor:

NEWARK, N. J., November 28, 1872.

Since we haven't a friend in the world who isn't either a householder, married, or far away,—and have none but ourselves to cuddle on this fête-day, I am moved to dine with you in spirit, for want of your fleshly companionship. Your note of the 6th October, at all events, is on the book before me, and vouches for the fact there are some people on earth worth living for. Last year, Stoddard and E. D. B. S., Mother, Clem. and Mary, were all here. Now the Stoddards have, I am glad to say, a roost of their own. . . .

We are here in the same Newark hermitage—and I am still more of a recluse than when you left, and Fortune still refuses to tear off her bandage, see my merits, and lift me out of the infernal rut to which I seem to be doomed. If I could only, by one of those lucky chances which *come* to me—and which there is no use in seeking—hit upon the course of some congenial and noble enterprise, I don't care how arduous or hazardous, I still feel bold enough and young enough to change my whole mode of life, burn my ships behind me, and succeed or fail. But nothing of the sort comes in my way; and before I have a *practical* literary chance, I shall be past the *creative* period. Still, my health is better than ever; there are more years visible before me than there were at twenty-five; and some morsel of faith, hope, or what-not, whispers to me that the track of my mind-revolution will yet cross that of the world's real, practical literary work. Then the harmonies will be again restored, and I shall be a part of the solar system. Meantime, your old friend is still a wandering and scarcely visible star.

It is refreshing to me, anyhow, to observe that you can afford to lie fallow, and are so sure of the return, at the appointed time, of your absent *daimon*. And yet, there is no more delightful work than, nor any which, so fairly satisfies the conscience for literary idleness as, the collection of materials for future work, and your Summer must have been thoroughly well spent. My *Tribune* letters have given you an idea of our life during the same period. In addition to these I about half-finished a series of papers on the representative *Victorian Poets*, intended for the *Atlantic*—in fact, ordered by Howells—but he and I have had some misunderstanding, and I feel no ambition to go on with them.

As for poetry, I have written none worth while; could write a lyric per week, but do not see the use of writing any more lyrics. I wish to do some larger work, but am oppressed with the old trouble, *lack of theme*. This is not your trouble, it seems, and if you have invented a story, I envy and congratulate you. Your improvisations I see occasionally in *Harper's*, etc. Do you ever see

Scribner's? It is growing better monthly, in illustrated articles, etc. Dick failed to get ready an article promised for the New Year's number, and I have supplied its place with a heavy paper on the relations of Poetry and Science. Also have written reviews of *Gareth*, *Cranch's Æneid* and *Parson's Poems*, for the same number, to help Gilder out.

What news can I tell you? Very little. To-day we are pained by the *Tribune* bulletin of Mr. Greeley's critical condition. We have been whipped in the late campaign, by the Democrats, who are Hessians, and never faithful to any flag unless liberally supplied with loot.—We have a host of English notables here as lecturers, and have toasted and puffed them to heart's content. They are all unconscious humbugs, however, not half equal to our home product. McDonald, *me judice*, is a vague rhapsodist, and no artist in any sense; Froude is an obstinate old pedant; Yates is a good fellow and fourth rate man; etc., etc. Well, dear Bayard, we all think and talk of you daily; and all send our household affection to each and all of you. Dear, true Marie, dear Bayard, we shall never forget you.

Stedman's brave, critical optimism, his fiery sympathy, throbs in his reply of January 14, 1873, to a letter from William Winter; in his diary he remarks, also: "Wrote Winter a cheering letter as well as I could. I have the same discouragements that he has, and feel them keenly."

Since receiving your Christmas note—and it was very good in you to think of me on that day—I have wanted to drop you just a line, but have been too tired, or too busy, or haven't had the heart. To-night I can't tone myself up to any literary work, yet have a lonely half-hour, out here in my Jersey hermitage, before going to bed. Your letter is pathetic, and makes me feel sufficiently mournful, as I recognize in it the sadness of a manly and poetic nature—which I, for one, have long appreciated and somewhat instinctively understood. I suppose that occasionally, though we may be nothing better than *farceurs*—and have had our share of jest and cynicism withal, we may comfort each other with what courage and hope are left to us. Possibly men of culture have hearts as well as heads, and are entitled to their share of the joys and sorrows which are common to the common sort. We have the "passions of our kind," and something of the religion, though our Presbyterian relatives don't exactly comprehend it.

You speak of a sense of failure in literature. I know what you mean, and have felt it in my own case; but have a kind of dogged, critical faculty within me, which helps me to look at the matter independently and determine whether it be so, or not. You say that your books and thoughts are not in every household, and are not quoted daily here and there like those of some later or more popular favorites. In the first place, you must allow something for the period. The worlds before and after the deluge were not more different than our republics of letters before and after the late War. The greatest literary "hits," from 1855 to 1861, were not a basis for successful book-ventures, or for establishing permanent reputations. Then, for ten years, the new generation read nothing but newspapers. Now, still another generation of readers has risen—new Pharaohs, who know not Joseph,—and the new writers, who first have caught their ears, hold them for the time being: with very ephemeral stuff, too, for the most part.

Again: I take it that we all obtain nearly what we strive for, if we have a mind to *pay the price*. If success in literature be, at first, to win the admiration and love of the foremost in one's own profession, you can well be satisfied with what you have done, and await the impulses and chances of the future. Moreover, in your bread-and-butter specialty of dramatic criticism, you stand confessedly at the head. Eclipse first, and the rest nowhere. The trouble is that in the pure dreams of youth, we all think that we can live and die by our ideals; but are sorely tried in after years, when we see others, whose efforts are on a lower plane, meeting with that material success which is so encouraging. Our faith and principle hardly hold out. So long as one has buoyant physical health, however, life itself is such a joy, that he does not stop to strike a debit and credit balance of failure or success. But when to professional discouragement and toil (—I know all about it—) is added physical weakness or chronic disease, it *is* impossible to be hopeful at heart, however proudly we may confront the people we meet. Dear W., I don't tell you not to feel as you do, because I have too many such feelings myself; but I do wish to have you know that I understand you; that it will add a deeper shade to the darkness of my own inner life, if you do not soon have your share of this common good that is your right; and that I cannot bear to think that you are not to have fair years before you of admirable work; stimulated by the *popularis aura* which even Landor confesses to be the atmosphere we all to some extent need. You may be sure that whatever failure such men as you experience grows out of the *only* difficulty in our literary life—want of *themes* suited to *our* tastes and aspirations.

CHAPTER XVI

THE GIFT OF A YEAR'S BOUGHT LIBERTY

1873

Stedman's restlessness, and his subtle presaging of worlds more real and more ideal soon to be traversed by the revolution of his mind, became more intense, until with the New Year, he resolved "to devote 1873 to my literary reputation—so long neglected—if I starve or die for it! to show the demoralized reading-public that good work is worth reading." In pursuance of these "deliberate literary intentions," by February 1, 1873, the Stedmans were comfortably settled in a "French Flat" at No. 205 West Fifty-sixth Street; when, as Stedman writes, he replunged into society, then very brilliant among the New York *literati*. Old friendships were renewed, and new ones made. At a lecture by John Hay he met Miss Kate Field, of whom Stedman was ever after a stanch, admiring friend.

But despite his "intentions" the treacherous whirlpool of Wall Street made it necessary, until June, for him to give day after day to the steering of his financial bark; now successfully breasting the high waves; now shipping more water than was well for the pilot's tranquillity of mind, and for his expected freedom for *consecutive* literary work. He remarks: "In Newark I had time to spare and no ideas; here, ideas enough and no time." His valiant purpose made him fight steadily on. When evening came if he were not indulging his starved appetite for intellectual society, or for needed recreation, he was to be found at his table, working often till long past midnight, upon his essays on the *Victorian Poets;* upon various poems and articles; and in revising his three volumes of poetry for a complete edition, if any favorable occasion should arise.

His essay on Walter Savage Landor into which, Stedman says, he threw his whole heart and brain, appeared in *Scribner's*, May, 1873. It was received with warmth both by scholars and by the public. Such a letter as the following, from T. W. Higginson, encouraged him to go on with the series:

I wish to thank you heartily, not merely for sending me the *Scribner* with your Landor article, but for writing it. It is delightful. We rarely have essays ever of that kind in our magazines, still less of that quality. I can honestly say that I have read no magazine paper for a long time with such enjoyment. It has a delicacy, originality and freshness such as Whipple never shows; and an eveness of execution, a clearness and purity of style, and a judicial quality, all of which put it above anything of Lowell's in that department. It is an honor to our literature. I enjoyed it more than your "Theocritus and Tennyson" because there I was troubled by a suspicion that you were pressing the matter a little too far. Some of your touches are unsurpassable—that about the lovely *Rose Aylmer*, e. g.,—"living on it for weeks" is a daring thing to say—yet it is just what I *did*. The "head of a normal school" the newspaper with "every age for its date of issue" the "prototype of our modern formation"—there are many such felicities. His "having no fear of the shortness of life to stimulate his ambition" is a new and admirable point,—the "texts for an essay on amateurship"—and that fine formula which itself includes all these comments of mine "the composer of a symphony has, we trust, melody enough at his command."

I speak the more freely because the newspapers will hardly do you justice. Why do you not write more prose?

I have Landor's Idyllia (1820) given by himself to Rev. Mr. Wray and with this autograph note "The worthy priest Luigi Serviti, for whose benefit I ordered these poems to be publisht, neglected the Preface—the other faults are chiefly my own, not having lookt at the Idyls for many years.

W. S. L.

I suppose you remember Emerson's paper on Landor in an early *Dial?* It has admirable points especially that of washing his fingers in water, then in wine, after an indecency. Of all English prose I think the closing vision of Fiammetta and the Pentameron the most beautiful.

Aldrich wrote: "You stopped the sale of one copy of *Scribner's* by sending me the May number of that magazine. I intended to buy it expressly to read your paper on Landor. It is an admirable study, and I've only one fault to find with it,—a fault you can correct by a second article,—its brevity. I wish you would write another paper, and give fifteen or twenty specimens of Landor's lyrics. They are, as you know well, marvellously-cut cameos, and would be a revelation to the general run of readers. I really believe that a small volume of Landor's best short poems would meet with a fair sale now. What an excellent introduction your essay would be to such a collection! Why don't you make it?" This led to the compilation of the slim volume of Landor's lyrics, entitled "Cameos," selected by Stedman and Aldrich, with an Introduction by the former.

By the end of May, 1873, Stedman determined to free himself from Wall Street and brave the chance of meeting his expenses otherwise. He closed his business affairs on May 31. His health was discouraging, breaking under the strain and its resultant sleepless nights; but a letter to Whitelaw Reid shows that whereas freed from the active bondage of Wall Street, Stedman's eye was ever watchful of the market.

June 3, 1873.

This P. M. I made a hasty draft of a lively article on "Pacific Mail," and went down to your rooms about seven o'clock to see if you would like such an editorial on a topic which is likely to rival "Erie" in due time. If you had been at home and said Yes, I would have gone down to Spruce Street and written it out. As it is I will go home and do it at leisure to-morrow A. M., and send it down to you.

—While I was actively engaged in stocks, I steadily refused the many orders received to write such editorials, fearing that I might not write impartially. At present I have no stock-interests, and am only a curious and, I think, well-informed observer of the new Pacific Mail move.

in book-form. Besides his work on the Landor book, "Cameos," and its Preface, Stedman had the reading of proof for his collected poetical works; and for a tragedy, "Bianca Cappello," by his mother. Mrs. Kinney had written for "Bianca Cappello" a dedicatory sonnet to her poet-son. "There is just one insuperable objection," the son writes, "to putting it as a dedication, and that is a secret even from you just now. Ere long I will tell it to you, and pledge you my word that you will not be displeased. . . . Meanwhile, I shall keep the sonnet by me as a genuine leaf of laurel for my slow-growing crown." The secret was that the son had already affectionately and reverently dedicated *his* volume of collected poems to his mother—"in gratitude for whatsoever portion I inherit of her own sweet gift of song."

A reflection of his days is given in some letters:

To R. W. Gilder.

PREMIUM POINT, N. Y., August 19, 1873.

Many thanks for your letter, your cheque, your Magazine, and your good words. I now hear from Fred. that you need the next article sooner than I supposed. It takes me rather aback, for I had just finished my Landor book, at rare intervals of cessation from a wasting illness which clings to me this Summer, and which writing aggravates, and had hoped to write your article by easy stages and pick up meanwhile. The Tennyson paper was half laid-out, but I didn't want to have it appear in the November Number, and recent re-reading of Mrs. Browning gave me a genuine author's impulse to write of *her:* a charming and very *popular* subject. So I threw the Tennyson article aside, and commenced last Thursday on Mrs. Browning. You must understand, Watsy, that I just pick up a little strength, and if I overwork myself a single day come down again. . . . Now I *can't* be sure of writing a *first-class* paper on Mrs. Browning by September 1st or 5th—such as I need to write and you need to have. But I have sketched out in three evenings half of it—on her *Maidenhood in England* (to her 37th year) and can make a beautiful short paper of six pages for the November Number, by the 5th—to be followed by a paper in the December Number on her *Married Life* *in Italy.* (Both critical, like the *Landor.*) Will that do? *Possibly* I can write the whole in one ten-page article by September 5th. Could make it shorter, even, *with more time to boil it down.* Will *try* to do the latter, but fear, as this A. M., in consequence of overwork yesterday, I was taken ill again, and it makes me so frightened and despondent—at this critical year for me, when I have *so* much at stake. My dear boy, I pray that you may never know what it is to be "handicapped" with ill-health always stepping in at the wrong moment. Am getting poorer, weekly, from the troubles of this year, and positive inability to attend to business or earn money. Shall fight it through till all my proofs are read, my books out, and my mother's book, and your article written—if it impoverishes or kills me.

From T. B. Aldrich.

ELMWOOD, August 21, 1873.

I send you the first rough proof of the "Introduction." I am looking about my skull for words to tell you how exquisite I think that essay is. I can only say that in my opinion it is worthy of the four poems enclosed with it, to show you the style of page, type, ornament, etc. I shall not spare myself (or Osgood's bank-account) in making this the loveliest book ever printed in this country. I've an idea for a cover which I shall experiment on by and by—delicate tool-work in *gold* and a medallion in *Pompeiian* (if that is spelt right) *red* stamped on *highly embossed black linen cloth.* It will look like a rich tile dug out of Roman earth—if I can make the workman into an artist. That is something God hasn't done with the particular workman I shall be brought in contact with. Thank you for leaving the dedication of the volume in my hands. I think we had better dedicate it to each other! There are so many preliminary pages—fly-leaves, contents, Introduction, Swinburne's memorial verses, etc.,—that I would hesitate before adding another, even if I wanted to compliment somebody very highly.

The more I think of our little book the more reason I see for believing that its success will not be in proportion to its size. If it *sells*, I'll never do any more original writing!

By the way I think Swinburne's memorial verses are not a translation of the poem in Greek which he addressed to Landor in "Atalanta." I fancy they were written subsequently, but don't know.

"Our revels now are ended." I hope our two names on the same title-page will be shaking hands and congratulating each other and "standing by" each other through all eternity! Three thousand years from now somebody will be wondering who those two clever barbarians were who made the only collection "we have" of the writings of Henry Greenleaf Landor! There's fame for you!

To R. W. Gilder.

PREMIUM POINT, N. Y., August 22, 1873.

As I am now writing about Mrs. Browning, I will make again on your beautiful sonnets the criticism which I make on *her* earlier works,—*viz.* that you sometimes use quaint words from which the element of *poetic quaintness* (a charming element) is *absent*, because they are, apparently, forced in, and don't come in naturally. There, study away on that! and see if you can make anything of it. Mrs. Browning's *greatest* poetry—her *Portugese Sonnets*—are less *odd* and have *less mannerism* than any other of her poems. Why? because she was then in her very prime of health, happiness, experience, and had a real theme in which she was *vitally* interested. Your poetry is so good that it doesn't *need* any strained adjectives, etc., to help it out.

Have got along with my Mrs. Browning article more readily than I expected, though I am not at all well. In fact, have nearly half completed it this week, and hope to be able to give you the whole, ten pages more or less—possibly ten and one half, by the 5th or 7th. You see I am making it so perfect, that I can't write it *currente calamo*, like my newspaper letters. My *rule* in all essay writing is not to have a *sentence* that doesn't contain an *idea*, an *imaginative comparison*, or a *fact*. Among a thousand sentences in that Landor article you will not find a single exception to this rule. The paper on Mrs. Browning I write *from the heart*, and really enjoy the work: owing to the beautiful subject, it can scarcely fail to be popular. You must give it a "blow" when the November number is advertised. By the way: about Harte. . . . As a poet, *he isn't much*—nor was Dickens—but he's a great prose-idyllist. Am disappointed in the third part, because Carrie doesn't turn out to be Mrs. Starbottle's own lost baby! 'Twould have been more artistic.

From R. W. Gilder.

September 15, 1873.

I am *wild* over your Browning—and I have not yet read the last part thoroughly. That is just my idea of criticism.—Hereafter when people ask me what is my ideal of that art I shall say read Stedman's Mrs. Browning!—and Landor—and we are yet to have Tennyson and the rest. I am proud to have such papers in the Magazine!

Criticism should excite artists to noble effort. That is what this paper does for me. It has filled me with new purpose with regard to my first poem. . . .

Your letter stirred my soul like a trumpet blast. Others have encouraged me greatly, but none more *help*fully. I will cut off my right hand rather than send out any poor metric work.

Your articles are going to do more good than you imagine.

In later years, Stedman used to say that his essay on Mrs. Browning was his tribute to Woman. Among the many letters, which this favorite essay brought to him, was one from Mrs. Laura C. Bullard, which he considered "a beautiful letter."

I have just been reading your critique on Mrs. Browning, and it has given me such great pleasure, that I feel as if I *must* thank you for it. If I am a little *gushing*, in my praise of it, you must forgive me, for I am all aglow with the enthusiasm which such an artistic and noble production pours through one's veins—for it is not alone the just and discriminating criticism, the exquisite style, or the close and thorough analysis of the article which reveals to us the poet and the woman, that has quickened my pulses and set my heart beating as I read it,—it is more than this, fine as these are—the strong *manliness* that breathes through its pages, is what has stirred me most—the large heart, the clear vision, the frank utterance of the writer, the catholicity of his intellect, have all given me a new sense of possession, a new delight in such a friend, as I have in you. I never knew you half so well and of course I never admired you half so much before.

I think your essays on modern literature are making a new era in American literary history. We are singularly deficient in *real critical* art—and it seems to me that you are the man to do for

English literary artists what St. Beuve has done for the French writers of his time.

I have written you *just* as I *felt*—and I am sure you will appreciate the *impulse* which has led me to write this note, even if you are indifferent to the praise.

To Bayard Taylor.

September 16, 1873.

By your letter of August 9th, acknowledging my note, it appears that a *letter*, which I previously mailed you must have miscarried. I think that I said a good deal about "Lars": a poem which seems to me, upon the whole, the most sustained and poetical of your longer works; beautifully finished, healthful, breezy, picturesque—and with a genuine theme; a poem that will *last*, though not in the wretched, immediate *fashion* of this demoralized American period. Cultured as are Hay and Harte, they are almost equally responsible with "Josh Billings" and the "Danbury News" man for the present *horrible* degeneracy of the public taste—that is, the taste of the newest generation of book-buyers. The whole country, owing to the *contagion* of our American newspaper "exchange" system, is flooded, deluged, swamped, beneath a muddy tide of slang, vulgarity, inartistic bathers, impertinence and buffoonery that is not wit.

I feel that this is not the complaint of a superannuated Roger de Coverley nor Colonel Newcome, for I am in the prime and vigor of active, noonday life, and at work right here in the metropolis. It is a clear-headed, wide-awake statement of a disgraceful fact. With it all, I acknowledge, the demand for good books also increases—and such works as Taine's *Septembre*, etc., have a large standard sale. But in poetry, readers have tired of the past, and don't see clearly how to shape a future; and so content themselves with going to some "Cave" or "Hole in the Wall" and applauding slang and nonsense, spiced with smut and profanity. It is trying, but will all come out right in the end.

Didn't know of your history of Germany, till the receipt of this letter. Thought you at work, chiefly, upon Goethe. Am glad you mean to write more poetry, and strongly advise you to get hold of a dramatic, American theme, merely for policy's sake. "Lars" seems to me a beautiful theme, and American besides; but the people want *neo*-Americanism. We must adopt their system, and *elevate* it—as we are wont to tell the divines with respect to the stage.

Since my letter has missed you, perhaps I ought briefly to tell you of my past year's doings. . . . Meanwhile, my money is about all spent. . . . Well, I am a regular Calvin Edson, but shall stick to my year's campaign, though where I am to get $100. a week after October 1st, God only knows! The trouble is that for years I haven't been able to sit at a desk and think and write, *three hours per diem*, (instead of your ten) without breaking down in a fortnight. That is a trouble men as sturdy as Howells (who has been a stocky giant) and yourself luckily can't *understand*. As for letters, I can't write them. My pen, *slow* in book-work, swift in journalism, is a swallow's wing in epistolary writing, and the exertion and extra labor which my correspondence demand are the straws which break *this* camel's back. If you'll only come back here, I'll agree to *talk* you to death, if need be. . . .

If my writings are appreciated this year, I shall feel rewarded. A little of the *popularis aura* is my right, and would do me good, though coming late. If it don't come, I shall even then have a better conscience than I have had; and can leave my children a revised collection of their father's poems—so much less than I ought to do; and could have done had I not been so handicapped with domestic expenses and insufficient health. Have never one-quarter reached my ideal.

. . . Do you know, Taylor, that I could have had the managing Editorship of the *Tribune* (Reid's *former* position) last Spring, but neither Reid nor myself, dared to run the chance of my health giving out in the first month. Besides, it would have completely shut me out from all society and literary work, turned my nights into days, etc. But I actually cried at having to give it up.

September 22d.—This letter was broken in upon by my sudden removal to town, and the "settling down" process—also, by the panic in the Stock market, which has ruined half the railway magnates, and stock-holders, and reduced my seat on the Exchange from a value of $8000. to that of $2000. I suppose, also, that it will completely kill the book-trade, which promised to be large, and spoil my year's work. I'm a regular Jonah: have *always* published in a panic year—1860—1864—1869—1873! Funny, is it not? Well, I've been preaching hard times for years, and *now* we're going to have them. We are all back in town, and have the "courage of despair." Do you remember the riot of '71, and our dinner that evening at the Gilsey? Did I not suggest that evening a pamphlet, *à la* "Battle of Dorking," to be called the "Sacking of New York"? Well: I wrote nearly all of it, predicting the smashing up of the Tweed Ring, the exposure of the Railway Bond bubble, and the "Crisis of '73." So much of it has come true, that I almost expect the "Sacking" to follow. It would, if the Savings Banks should suspend. Part of my pamphlet was printed in the *Graphic*, six months ago, and people are now recalling it: 'twas a mere piece of *a priori*, *Berkeleian vaticination*. But at last the people see how rascally it has been for the great Bond houses to sell their fraudulent securities to investors all over the land. 'Tis the petroleum swindle on the large, respectable, white-cravated, Philistine scale. Dear me, I shall never make a financier!

An occurrence, which may interest, in reference to the panic of Friday, September 19, 1873, when some twenty-three important houses failed, is that Stedman prevailed upon the Board to suspend sessions of the Stock Exchange, which they did from the 20th until the 30th of September, thereby staying the panic. Chagrined that just at the moment when he clearly saw opportunities to buy stocks, thirty per cent below their real value, he had no capital, Stedman wrote succinct editorials on the situation for the *Tribune*. Of Stedman's business acumen, the *Chicago Tribune*, September 21, 1873, remarks:

> If there exists any remnant of the ancient prejudice that a man who writes verse abandons the field of good, practical common sense, Mr. E. C. Stedman, the broker-poet of New York, ought to pass for a living and lively refutation of the fallacy. The statement which he made in New York on Friday, in the fiercest heat of the Black Friday furnace, contains more of acute discernment and good judgment than all the non-poetical brokers of New York could develop in a generation. His mind was clear enough, in spite of his poetic imagination and sensitiveness, to see through the maze of excitement, analyze the character of the panic, and trace the cause of the disaster just where it belongs. The fact that Gen. Grant held a midnight council soon afterward and ordered just such an interference as that to which Mr. Stedman traced the

whole blame for the present disastrous condition of things in New York, will not induce sensible people to change their estimate of Mr. Stedman's judgment. Mr. Stedman has done his kind some service by demonstrating that poetry and political economy are not absolutely incompatible.

From T. B. Aldrich.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., October 20, 1873.

We're an unlucky pair to have books coming out at this doleful season. However it can't last forever. My stories came out in the thick of it; but your *Poems* will have a little better show. Mr. Macdonough's paper in the November *Scribner*[1] ought to sell an edition for you, and would in ordinary times. It is admirable in manner and matter. It is the first really elaborate and scholarly *critique* that has been drawn forth by any of us younger fellows. Anthony's portrait of the *outside* of your head is quite as faithful and artistic. I congratulate you on your artist and your critic—but most I congratulate you on yourself. The Browning article is worthy to go with the Landor. It must have been twice as hard to do. Landor's organization, mental, moral and physical, was simplicity itself compared with Mrs. Browning. You handled the subject with great, subtle insight, it seems to me.

To Charles Dudley Warner.

NEW YORK, October 29, 1873.

I resolved that, whenever I should be so fortunate as to see a "Complete" edition of my verse, I should claim the luxury of giving it to any fellow-craftsman whom I particularly esteemed and admired. And as the postal authorities, confound them! won't let me say what I think of you, upon the fly-leaf of the volume mailed you to-day, why—let this note be the chamberlain accompanying it. . . .

I have just seen an editorial of yours. You are quite right. I am Connecticut, all over, but by no means the "only one." No Jean Paul about me, so far as the dear old State is concerned.

From Ralph Waldo Emerson.

CONCORD, November 11, 1873.

I have to thank you heartily for the book of Poems which I received from you in the week before the last. My first discovery therein was the poem "John Brown of Osawatomie," an old favorite of mine, and till now its author,—for whose name I have enquired for years,—has been entirely unknown to me. Encouraged by this important success, I read the new poems which your note indicated, and then the older and oldest, and all with great contentment, and much surprise that I should never have met with them before. I rejoice in their technical skill, and in their noble tone, and shall look with great interest at the future productions of their author. . . . I have never received the notes of Landor which you were so kind as to send me, but I shall, on my first visit to the Boston Athenæum, find the Journal and the article.

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[1] "Edmund Clarence Stedman," by Augustus R. Macdonough.

From J. G. Holland.

Burlington, Vt., November 9, 1873.

Thank you for your volume of poems, and the opportunity it has given me to make your acquaintance. I have taken it with me, as my only book on this trip, and it has been to me a source of great pleasure. I do not think I have ever read a poet who has impressed me so strongly. I cannot quite understand how the man who wrote "The Blameless Prince," could also have written "The Freshet"; how one who could write "Alectryôn," could also write "Israel Freyer's Bid for Gold." I think there must be two of you, who have not yet got wholly together, so as to be able to work as one man. One of you is a Greek, the other is a Yankee. One of you is full of classic story and legend and charged with classic inspiration, the other is the virile, stirring, practical sharp seer and sharp worker of to-day.

It is a grief to me that men like you should be obliged to do anything but write poetry. The lot of such writers as Tennyson and Longfellow seem to me almost the loveliest ever dealt out to man. To pour out one's whole life in music, and to be sure that that is one's mission—truly nothing can be sweeter than this! To a man like myself, whose life has been mixed of all literary ingredients, and full of practical action and homely cares, the lot of him who knows his vocation to be song, and nothing else, and who finds in circumstances the friends alike of his purse and his muse, seems the lot of a king or a god.

I have been most interested in the longest poems. "The Blameless Prince" seems to me one of the best elaborate poems that

America has produced. I am not sure that the verse used has given you the best and finest vehicle for the handling and presentation of your material. Indeed, I am sure that the decided triumph you have won has been against a disadvantage. Without adopting the extreme of freedom used in "Alice of Monmouth," there was a medium that would have been more flexible to the demands of varied passion. And then—and then—perhaps the Art would have been less, and the poem would have lost in dignity what it gained in other directions and other qualities.

But, dear Stedman, I had no idea of writing such a letter as this when I sat down. I simply wanted to thank you for your poems, which I very sincerely admire. Your place in our American literary firmament is secure. May God give you a long, strong life so that your country may get all there is in you!

These love poems of yours, ah! I see when and what you have been! How will you feel when you hear the steps of young love retreating, no more to come at your call, save as a memory? When woman ceases to charm in the sweet old way, will you sing, think you? Will the "Aftermath" be worth the mowing and "mowing away"? I don't know, but I am yours truly.

From T. W. Higginson.

Newport, R. I., November 16, 1873.

Thanks for the volume. The poem of yours that I *envy*—your high water mark if I know anything about it, and one of the very choicest things in our literature is that exquisite "Stanzas for Music." It is as golden as anything of Landor's, and has a finer spiritual quality than anything he ever wrote. It rises in one delicious swell, and the ending is as perfect as the waves of the sea it describes. I thought so when I first read it, and think so still. I feel about it as I do about Holmes's "Chambered Nautilus" and wonder in what perfect hour of one's life such a thing has birth. "The Undiscovered Country" has something of the rare quality.

I see you do not include your translation from Theocritus, which seemed to me a rare combination of the literal and the rhythmical. The reviewer of my Petrarch sonnets in the last *Nation*, . . . seems to think that only the literal is to be looked after—but I think that in all poetical translation the problem is to combine the maximum of strictness and the maximum of grace. This is certainly true in so difficult a thing as the translation of Italian sonnets into English, preserving the recurrence of the rhymes; and I am sure that mine are the most literal of such translations that I have seen.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

(FROM AN UNFINISHED DRAMA)

Thou art mine, thou hast given thy word;
Close, close in my arms thou art clinging;
Alone for my ear thou art singing
A song which no stranger hath heard:
But afar from me yet, like a bird,
Thy soul, in some region unstirred,
On its mystical circuit is winging.

Thou art mine, I have made thee mine own;
Henceforth we are mingled forever:
But in vain, all in vain, I endeavor—
Though round thee my garlands are thrown,
And thou yieldest thy lips and thy zone—
To master the spell that alone
My hold on thy being can sever.

Thou art mine, thou hast come unto me!
But thy soul, when I strive to be near it—
The innermost fold of thy spirit—
Is as far from my grasp, is as free,
As the stars from the mountain-tops be,
As the pearl, in the depths of the sea,
From the portionless king that would wear it.

To Charles Dudley Warner.

New York, November 23, 1873.

I should have written earlier to acknowledge your letter, and more especially to render you my hearty and grateful thanks for your extended, generous notice of my volume,—but, upon second thoughts I have waited for leisure to commune with you at a little more length, and to say some things which nothing has inclined me to bother anyone else with. It does not escape my notice that your article is very carefully and admirably written, that—like a whole-souled fellow, with one of your natal-constituents, so to speak, under your protection—you go to the farthest extent possible and rule in the culprit's favor—on doubtful points; moreover, I read between the lines that you really take an interest in all the possibilities, and I catch noteworthy hints which could only spring from true perception and sincerity. For all this I thank you, and nothing of it shall be forgotten.—Let me add, however, that in view of the locality, the writer, and the character of the notice, it is of more service to my *feelings* than any other of the long and numerous reviews which the book—somewhat to my surprise—has already received. When I say "surprise," I simply mean that having been too busy for years to pay the least attention to *pushing*, and having long been used to see my poor work overpraised, and my best work scarcely noticed, it has surprised me that this collection should receive so much attention, of one kind or another. What I know of your career induces me to believe that you may have had similar experiences—very likely they are those of most honest workmen during the past fifteen years.—I take it that a writer cares little for praise or blame—what he wishes is to be rightly *understood* by the right men, if he is sufficiently human to have any thought beyond the work itself. Now I think one can see in your notice that the review in the Springfield *Republican* has met your eye and consideration. *Hinc illæ!* The *Republican* article is scholarly and honest and of itself commands my respect—though I'm not sure whether the author does, or not. I reckon *not*, if he be one Sanborn, who is a kind of off-horse—such as you find in every Yankee town—apt to exalt the minor above the major premise, felicitous at discovery of greatness in hiding, and resolutely differing from the verdicts of other men. *I heartily agree* with him in what evidently is his opinion—to wit, that my book has been overpraised, and ought to be taken down a few pegs. No one can think so poorly of it as I do, for it is very far below what I wish to do, and long have dreamt of doing. It is simply what I've been *able* to do, under the most baffling circumstances—the result of odd hours, filched from sleep or business, in fifteen years of struggling, ill-health, anxiety and—but no matter! Instead of having been written with consecutive "industry," by a man who is at ease, and lives in his study, it is the scattered lyrics of a man who has led, during this time, the most *unliterary* life of *any author in America.* Why, there isn't much of it: in a year's *leisure* one could write just as much verse, and as carefully finished, as there is in the whole book. There comes a time to every poet who has *brains* (what Opie mixed his colors with) when he says—I'm tired of composing melodies, nocturnes, etc., although they bring me so much apiece: I won't do anything more till I write an opera or oratorio." But "You know how it is yourself." His affairs, or health, or what-not, won't enable him to: he still is forced to content himself with brief lyrical expression at random intervals. In short, he does *the best he can.*

My dear Warner, I am drawn to you this Sunday, by some curious instinct. I suppose (modestly!) birds of the upper air see each other at a long distance. Hence this egotistical outburst, to which no one else has been subjected by me, for many *callous years*. You won't find any morbid egotism in my volume. I see that it is accused of over-objectivity, and am glad of it, for years ago I swore that my personal ill-health and distresses should not creep into my poems. After all, it is the humorists and healthy writers, like yourself, who have known real troubles; the sentimentalists of my acquaintance have never had any—at least, like the bachelor's children, "none to speak of." Now the particular matter is, just now, that I don't want *you*, also, to be imposed upon by this phantom wall of "culture" and "study" which the critics are setting me atop of, to keep me from my fellows! It is all stuff and nonsense. My schooling was only half-finished. Some people are born "cultured," or with *taste*, and pick up *culture*, as they go along; I can tell at once whether my work is right or not, and so, I suppose, can you. The *truth* is that I am handicapped with ill-health, and a family, in this desperate city, and for years have been unable to do anything I have wished to. For two months past a little poem has been in my head, which I can't get time and courage to write. For ten years a great poem—in the same way. I stand all day on 'Change; go home perfectly knocked up; towards midnight get an hour or more for my *Victorian Poets*. Still, I do write more than I could as a *journalist*. You know, of course, what the restrictions are *there*. But as for "study," why I can't even read the current books.

I notice your delicately implied point with regard to critical writing. In a recent article I said "The critical and creative faculties are not often united in one person, etc." This should be corrected, methinks, to the "critical and creative *habits*," etc.

For the best painters are the best critics of painting—(so far as I've observed)— and 'tis just so in every department of art. Haven't you been writing criticisms for many years? I have, since my first day on the old Norwich *Tribune*—since then, in every magazine, etc., of importance. As for that, *every leader-writer is a daily critic*. But one can't occupy much of his brain and time with criticism, and do creative art also. *There* you are right. One nail drives out another. It is a good thing to alternate them.

You may perhaps guess from this letter that I'm not very well, just now,[1] and am disturbed because my circumstances will not permit me—when I have the ear of the public, and am at my prime of life—to do the really important work which you demand of me, and for which I have already sacrificed the other prizes of life in vain. If one gives up his birthright, he doesn't want to lose the mess of pottage also. One thing we can all abide by—our determination that what we can do, be it never so little, shall be the genuine thing with no humbug about it.

I am quite as much interested in the great American novel, as the great American poem, and am watching you fellows who are "going for it." Have long had my ideas as to the direction in which you will first succeed, and am very curious, by the way, with regard to your and Clemens' book. Will Gilder (*Scribner's*) have the volume for review? I suppose so, although 'tis a subscription-book. What a mint of money you'll make by it, in any event!

Speaking of "growth" in poets, etc. In *true* poets, of the artist kind, Milton, Keats, etc., the early work is apt to be as *poetical* as the later: art is art. One man is born with an ear and an eye; another has the poetic imagination, but lacks expression throughout life. My later poetry hasn't much more *finish* than my boyish verse; but certainly a wider vocabulary, representing, I hope, broader and richer thought. "Sustained" productions depend upon leisure, opportunity and *theme*, quite as much as on "progress." Certainly I couldn't have written the "Old Admiral" or "The Songster," fifteen years ago; nor you your best recent prose.

Will you come and see me when you next visit N. Y.? I'll agree never to recur to these or any personal topics again. This once, for all.—Mrs. Stedman says you shall have an arm-chair, and make hard-coal studies before our fire.—My love to sturdy Steve Hubbard, whom I know from the top of his head to his toe-ends for a man and a brother.

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[1] And also that a man needs one friend in his old haunts, who shall really understand his external limitations. [E. C. S.]

To Bayard Taylor.

New York, Christmas, 1873.

You and yours are always close to our hearts on Christmas Day. It is the season wherein we miss you most. A merrie Christmas to Marie and Lilian, and to yourself, my dear old loyal friend, from one and all of us! And may our households be reunited before the *annus revolvus* shall bring this unrestful orb around to another Winter solstice.

Your thrice welcome letter of Oct. 14th has been on my table for eight weeks—but these have been very important weeks to me, and thus far I've been unable to scratch the initials B. T. from my letter list. During this interval I have brought out three books—my own Complete Edition, the "Cameos," and mother's "Bianca Cappello." My circle of literary acquaintance and obligation has immensely widened during the past few years, and consequently letters—which must be answered at once—have poured in from every direction: sometimes 8 or 10 a day. Time after time I have come home and said—"Now, I *will* write my poem," or "I *will* write Taylor," "to-night," only to find enough letters (that *must* be answered) to occupy my brief evening. Between you and me, a writer of any reputation in N. Y. nowadays, has a hard time to do any work—what with daily business, callers, correspondence, and the few tempting dinners, etc., which he don't wish to decline. As for amusements and general society, he must stoutly deny himself such recreation,—or meet the fate of Bret Harte and other victims of fame and favoritism. I came over here to renew my alliances and pick up my reputation; have partially succeeded in the latter, and have achieved the former with a vengeance! I *have* to furnish a *Scribner* paper every two months (at good pay, too,); and, having no time to write except from 9 to 12 P. M. on such evenings as I am free and *feel well enough*, I *don't* see how the "Victorian Poets[1]" can be ready for Osgood next Summer. They have got to be prefaced, indexed, etc., and ought to be early in the printer's hands, as the Osgoodian delays are fearful and ruinous of late. As for poetry, I haven't been able to write a line for 8 months—though my brain is again seething with rhythmic themes.

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[1] A complete critical survey of English poets since Tennyson began. I opened the E. B. B. paper poetically, for the public's sake, but devote pages to criticising her technical faults. [E. C. S.]

Fred. (in Scribner's) tells me that Appleton has not yet got out the German history. When it is ready I shall give it a careful examination. It is a much-needed book; I need it myself, for one. There is no good *handbook* of German history, and I am sure, from your clear-headed style, correctness, and adaptability, that your work will exactly supply the want. I have just been reading, with real satisfaction, your beautiful poem—"The Two Homes." It is, by all odds the gem of the January *Atlantic*, and so pronounced, although Holmes's New Year's song is better than usual. Your recent life in Weimar must have been most enviable. If there is anything, in the guild, more delightful than mousing around among materials for a thoroughly congenial work, I should like to know of it! Having recently found time to glance over the newly-condensed "Life" by Lewes, I am greatly impressed with the need for a wholly different biography. Your idea of including Schiller's career (1759–1805) is highly important: in this way you really exhibit the history of imagination in Germany, during that period, and will make a dramatic and absorbing presentation. Macdonough expressed himself very much as I do, and doubtless you have heard from him ere this. He *is* a masterly fellow; I always think of the expression "thou calm, chaste scholar," when I talk with him. He is a kind of "Warrington," without ambition, and yet a better prose-writer than hundreds who have a lucrative notoriety. His book-reviews are the best now done. His article on E. C. S. was a difficult thing to do, and I think discovers a feeling of awkwardness in the earlier portion; 'tis, I mean, a little too ponderous for the light-weight of his *subject;* but it has been most widely noticed, and has done me *much* good, and also made his name better known than ever before—so that his work is in sharp demand. The English press (an English edition of *Scribner's* is printed) has noticed it extensively. When your *Goethe* shall appear, Macdonough will be the man to write *the* review of it. There isn't anything he doesn't know: languages, new and old,—science,—poetry, history, everything is at his command.

You have noticed the remarkable changes in the ownership of the *Atlantic* and *Every Saturday*. Probably I was the only writer not surprised by them. You know it has long been one of my "theories" (as E. D. B. S[toddard] calls them) that the sceptre would come back from Boston to N. Y., after a time, just as it did from Edinboro' to London. The metropolis, many-sided, all-embracing, is the true centre; and the provincial genius of the elder Boston writers has raised up no successors. Two years ago, I saw the time was close at hand, cut loose (mostly) from the *Atlantic*, and have thrown all my advice, influence, work, in favor of the "coming monthly," *Scribner's*. This, entirely apart from any abiding friendship for my publisher, Osgood. The *Atlantic* has steadily declined, despite the most friendly and extended *Tribune* aid, for several years past, in authority and circulation. The contrary process has obtained in New York. Literary society here, also, is becoming knit together, rich, catholic—a veritable power.

My book came out on the *worst* day of the worst panic, several weeks late. To my astonishment, it has been a literary success, and Osgood calls it a financial one—though I don't see the latter point. For once, however, I am repaid by appreciation far beyond my hopes, even. It seemed as if the entire press of the country was surprised at the "effect" of my collected poems, *tired of the recent school of words, color and slang*,—and had risen to give me a cordial, generous, extended, almost unanimous welcome. As you sometimes accuse me of underrating my blessings, and exaggerating my ills, you will understand that my present statement means that I am thankful—and means a good deal. I should think that I had seen some 80 long notices—from 1 to 4 columns, and they still keep coming in. Sanborn, it should be said, pitched into me in the Springfield *Republican* for not having "advanced" since my first book; while Howells refutes him by chastising me for including the early poems with the later. Howells also satirizes me for calling the book "Complete works." This is simply an error of fact. Osgood placed on the title page "Complete Edition"—a very different thing. Otherwise the book would not have been bought by many who object to buying my scattered volumes. And if a gray-haired man of 40, whose books have appeared at *wide-apart* intervals, and who has had 20 years of unrewarded labor, has'nt a right to a *complete edition* of his works up to date—who the devil has? Moreover, one-fourth of the poetry I have printed is excluded from this book. Otherwise, Howells, who has always rather liked my verse, in spite of himself, gives me a pleasant and careful review. The book received *no advertisement* from Osgood, who seemed totally bewildered by the panic, except a brief one on the morning of its appearance; it has sold itself. They printed 1200 copies, and sold 700 which they bound; then bound the rest, and have sold nearly all. Osgood calls this excellent for a *$2.50* (expensive) book. (It is a stock-book, you know, meant for *continued* sale.) *I* don't. I suspect they are satisfied, if they run off the first lot, and secure themselves—giving me no copyright until the second thousand. Any other publisher would have jumped at the "start" the book made, and rushed it. He got it up beautifully, as regards paper, etc. *It has sold itself*, and been almost the only book of the kind that has *sold* this Fall. All bound in "Calf" and "Antique" were snapt up in the holiday trade last week, and he could have sold hundreds more, if he had taken the pains to have them ready. I am tired of writing books, at personal loss of time, etc., and making money for publishers and none for myself. A year ago I had saved $5000., and said I would devote this year to literature. "Have I not kept my vow?" Yes, and have only $1400. over, to-night. My living has been $6000. this year—so that my art-life has cost me $2500. more than it has brought me. As Gifford says of his fishing-tour, (when I asked him if he had sketched any), "You can't serve God and Salmon!"

Cameos was due Dec. 1. Osgood finally brought it out the day before Christmas! A holiday-book!! T. B. A. and E. C. S. are cheated out of their copyright. Yet we made it a dainty book, and did hope to be repaid for it. (I have the three books for you here, ready against your return.) In fine, I feel encouraged and satisfied, so far as reputation is concerned and readers; vexed at the pecuniary outlook; sorry for Osgood, yet chagrined at him. My book has at last had *all the praise it deserves*. No one can be more sensible than myself of the lightness of my verses, compared with what I *hoped* to accomplish, and what I perhaps might have done, but for restrictions of sickness, labor, poverty, etc., etc. On the whole, I am more contented with the past year, because I have not neglected my duty—my art-life, as in former years. My conscience is less burdened. The past is past; the future lies before. We both are up to our necks in the chosen current of our lives—let us be cheery, and trust to gain and hold a steadily surer footing. We can hold one anothers hands, at all events!

Oliver Johnson says the *Tribune* is doing well, and the value of the stock is *sure*. Don't sell any more, but borrow on it, if you ever need money. Of course you can't expect dividends till the building is up, and leased, but then you'll get good ones.

We have a dinner-party in our flat once a fortnight. At the last, we had Hay, Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Warner, Mrs. Mapes-Dodge. At the one before the last; Reid, Kate Field, R. H. S. and E. D. B. S. Our janitor is a professional waiter, and serves us well.

R. H. S. is still out of a job, but *writing well*, in spite of his wrist; and getting, like myself, round pay from the magazines. I just received $206.50 for my Hood article (to appear in February *Scribner's*). Dick has written seven nice poems in succession. He has, you know, an annual "exposition of" verse, a "laying-time."

Howells' poetry has been severely treated by the critics, who haven't done him justice at all. Because he has a prose fame, they think he has no rights as a poet. Such is literary caprice! I am vexed; for his hexameter poems are simple, natural, delicious. . . .

CHAPTER XVII

LITERARY WORK AND ILL-HEALTH

1874–1875

From A. C. Swinburne.

Holmwood, Henley-on-Thames, Jan. 21, 1874.

I have just received your letter with the very graceful stanzas for music enclosed in it, announcing and accompanying the gift of the beautiful volume of selections from Landor; for all which I thank you at once most sincerely, as also for what I have *not* received—possibly through some misdirection or miscarriage which may yet be rectified—the note of two or three months since containing your article on Landor, which I should much like to see.

I congratulate you with all my heart on having done that article Fate disappointed my once cherished hope of doing. As the property of Landor's works is vested (I understand) in his friend and biographer Mr. Forster, who told me a good many years ago that he designed himself to edit a selection from the verse as well as the prose, it is of course impossible for me to intrude on his ground, and would be improper to solicit as a favour the leave which Mr. Browning has more than once, since he was informed of my original intention and the only reason which compelled me to resign it, kindly offered to procure for me from Mr. Forster; whose selection, when it does appear, will, I hope, be an improvement on the system of extracts given in his biography of Landor: which was not, I think, a very judicious example of the representation of a great writer by specimens and excerpts.

I am truly and deeply gratified by the great honour which you have done me in prefixing to your selection verses which I only wish were worthier of the high place assigned to them than I can honestly hope or believe them to be. I never thought them adequate to the subject in any way except perhaps as an expression of personal feeling, which may be thought to give them their only worth to which they can pretend; but their inadequacy is now more potent and flagrant in my own eyes than ever: though this does not diminish my pleasure in seeing them, or my sense of obligation to you for placing them, at the head of your beautiful anthology; from which I only regret to miss two or three of my especial favourites among the glorious multitude of flowers from which you have chosen so many and so well: for example, the "one white violet" (on E. Arundell), a fit companion to "Rose Aylmer," as a flower of life might be to one of death; the "cistus"—

> "Smoothen thy petals now
> Her Floral Fates allow";

the two on the deaths of Ternissa and Epicurus ("Ternissa! you are fled!" and "Behold, behold me, whether thou," etc.); the quatrain beginning, "To my ninth decade I have tottered on"—unless rejected as too painful to students who love his memory; the palinode or recantation (so to call it) of the "Epitaph at Fiesole"—

> "Never must my bones be laid
> Under the mimosa's shade";

and the lofty and pathetic "expostulation" of Sappho—"Forget thee? When? *thou* biddest me? dost *thou?*"

But, above all, I wonder to find wanting the very brightest (in my eyes at least) of all the jewels in Landor's crown of song; the divine four lines on "Dirce," which hold the place in my affections that those on "Rose Aylmer" did in Lamb's—

> "Stand close around, ye Stygian set,
> With Dirce in one boat conveyed!
> Or Charon, seeing, may forget
> That he is old and she a shade."

If ever verses besides her own were, in Sappho's phrase, "more golden than gold," surely these are. I looked again and again through your book in search of them, unable to believe that I had not at first accidentally passed over the page which they should have glorified. There is the whole Anthologie—all of it, I mean what is really composed of flowers—distilled in its essence into that one quatrain. These too, I think, might have found a place among their fellows:—"The leaves are falling; so am I";

"Ye little household gods, that make," etc. "Twenty years hence"; I think I am not wrong in saying that they are not among your "Cameos," but I have not time to look again before the post goes out, and I do not wish to let one day pass without thanking you for the gift of them. I should like to send you in return, if the publisher had sent me any copies as I expected and as he hitherto has not, a book of memorial verses—"Le Tombeau de Théophile Gautier"—to which I have contributed ten little poems of the elegiac or ἐπιτομιδιον order—two in English, two in French, one in Latin, and five "Epigrams" in Greek after the Anthologic pattern—a polyglot freak which has not been emulated by the other contributors in French, English, Italian, German, and Provençal and other dialects. Lemarre has published it in a very pretty form, and Victor Hugo heads our list superbly. (I should like to have seen in your selection Landor's late verses to him, and those earliest of all, which I have just remembered, written at school on Godiva and worth all that have been written on her since, however exquisite—"In every hour, in every mood.")

I trust you will prosper in the good and enviable work of diffusing among Americans the knowledge and love of Landor—they must be one with all readers worthy to know him. Pray remember me very kindly to Mr. Stoddard.

To his Mother.

January 25, 1874.

. . . This month it seems almost impossible for me to work—owing to social matters, etc., etc., combined with business labors. I am behind with everything, and have failed on my *April* article (Tennyson). Have just commenced it, this day, and *hope* to have it for May. The book ("Victorian Poets") must go over till next year. It cannot be got ready for Autumn. The Hood article is a success, all over the country. I hope you will like it. Have sent a copy to dear old Barry Cornwall, as it may give him pleasure to feel that he is not forgotten in these modern times. Howells has really accepted "The Lord's-Day Gale," at my price $100. Good for him. It is my strongest lyric, I think. Will appear in April. . . . 'Tis now 11 P. M., so good night, and God bless my dear Mother, is the prayer of her ever affectionate Edmund.

In his diary for January 7, 1874, Stedman says: "Big Sou'-easter on. Stayed at home and finished the first complete draft of 'The Lord's-Day Gale.' This poem is of a sort peculiarly my own: I have made careful studies for it, and really think it will amount to something worth while. At all events 'tis my tribute to the Yankee fisherman, whom I know and like so well. The first poem I have written in eight months. The best I ever wrote, in some respects."

The wreck of the noble Gloucester Fleet, in a terrific storm in St. Lawrence Bay, the previous Summer of 1873, had suggested his poem, in which, beyond his admiration for the sturdy fishermen, is his ever returning love for New England, her life and her ways:

> New England! New England!
>   Thou lovest well thine ocean main!
> It spreadeth its locks among thy rocks,
>   And long against thy heart hath lain;
> Thy ships upon its bosom ride
> And feel the heaving of its tide;
>   To thee its secret speech is plain.

When "The Lord's-Day Gale" was published in "Hawthorne, and Other Poems," 1877, Dr. Holland in a review in *Scribner's* said:

> "The Lord's-Day Gale" is a poem that will live, and a poem that shows where the writer is strongest. The storm roars over it as if it were itself a sea. The deadly mists drive through it, the waves beat themselves into foam among its lines as if every stanza were an island or a headland, and shattered ships and dying men were drifting around its words. And over all sweeps, again and again, the writer's pathetic "New England! New England!" as if into that dear and revered name he crowded the love and sympathy of a son, with the appreciation of the great tragedy and sorrow that came on the Lord's-Day to the dying at sea and the living at home. It is in every respect a noble poem, on the possession of which the friends of American literature are to be congratulated.

The words of the poet in thanks are these: "Your review is exquisitely written, and the passage referring to 'The

Lord's-Day Gale' seizes the very soul and substance of the ballad, and is a poem in itself. No one ever understood that ballad as you have, and no one else could write so finely about it."

From A. C. Swinburne.

Holmwood, Henley-on-Thames, Feb. 23rd, 1874.

I have so much to say in answer to your last despatches that I fear I may be tempted to exceed at once the bounds of the post and the limits of your patience if I write at such length as I wish we could talk together. First of all, even before Thanksgiving, let me say that in my opinion you have written the very best study containing the very truest estimate of Landor's genius that has ever yet been achieved. The only drop of qualifying bitterness in the pleasure with which I read and re-read it rises from the regret that it could not have come nine years before instead of after he went back to the Olympians; for I remember well how pleasant and how precious, for all his high self-reliance and conscious ἀυτάρκεια, the sincere tribute of genuine and studious admiration was even at the last to the old demigod with the head and the heart of a lion. I have often ardently wished I could have been born (say) but five years earlier, that my affection and reverence might have been of some use and their expression found some echo while he was yet alive beyond the rooms in which he was to die. The end was very lonely, and I fear the last echo of any public voice that reached him from England must have been of obloquy and insult. It is true that the lion at whom those asses' kicks were aimed was by no means maimed or clipped as to the claws and teeth. Did you ever see his vindication printed, but I believe not published, after the wretched affair which ended in his angry departure from England? It was trenchant and conclusive, including as it did a letter addressed to himself from the father of the young lady to whom his fatherly goodness and charity had been made the pretext for abuse and slander, thanking him in the most fervent terms of gratitude for the rescue of his daughter. . . .

Possibly you may know all this as well as I, but I have found very few even among the professed friends of Landor's memory who either knew or cared to remember the exact facts of the case;

and Forster in his biography has slurred the question over, as I cannot but think, with caution something more than legal and less than friendly. It is a shame that the most faithful and generous in his friendships of all men should have none to speak out for him now without shakings of head or hushings of voice, as though to lament the existence of some deplorable and unmentionable thing, when, as I do most truly believe, the only point in his conduct regrettable and possibly blamable was the substitution of English for Latin and print for manuscript in the expression of a just and honourable anger. If he could but have been content this time also, as so often before, with the sufficiently copious and vigorous repertory of terms to be found in the language of Martial and Catullus! I did not mean to write so much on this matter, but if you do not know the details it is well that you should, and even if you do you will excuse the unpleasant repetition for the love of Landor's memory which I know that you share with me. I send you his Italian dialogue of Savonarola which has never been published; it was prohibited in Italy I believe through priestly influence, and the edition remained on his hands in sheets. This is one of the copies of which he gave me as many as I wished to take away; so that you receive it, as it were, at one remove from his own hand, having only passed through mine. You will be amused to see his unquenchable prejudice (if prejudice it be, in which I confess to some share, though without knowledge enough to go upon) against Plato breaking out in the most quaintly incongruous time and place; but it is a noble "last print" of the Italian branch of that mighty tree. He told me that he thought he wrote Italian quite as well as English; I should not presume to say that I thought he did or did not.

Browning has some of Landor's unpublished MSS. that he has promised to shew me some day, of which one must be especially interesting; an "Imaginary Conversation" on the personal immortality of the soul between themselves and two other friends, in which the interlocutors take up different grounds for attack or defence of the doctrine of a future state. As I have not seen it I cannot say what sides are taken by what interlocutors; but of course I presume that Browning is not made to forsake the support of his cherished dogma. (This is, of course, merely my own conjecture expressed in confidence.) Landor himself, I know from his own lips, had no belief or opinion whatever on the subject;

"was sure of one thing," he said, "that whatever was to come was best—the right thing, or the thing that ought to come"; I give the exact sense, if not the exact phrase. I think I may say that he would have agreed with me that any matter so utterly incognizable is one on which it is equally unreasonable to have or to wish to have an opinion. Browning is also the happy possessor of a copy of the "Phocœans," which I have never seen and want to read.

You are wrong, by the bye, about the date of the first collected edition of Landor's English poems; a volume including Gebir, Count Julian, Ines de Castro, Ippolito di Este, and Miscellaneous Poems, was published by Moxon in 1837—five years before the first collected edition of Tennyson. I have his first volume, for which I gave two guineas, Poems English and Latin, 1795; it contains a good deal besides satire, tho' that is perhaps its best part, and the Epistle to Lord Stanhope, which I have also, *is*, I think, "something remarkable for a boy of nineteen," singularly polished and vigorous. You see by my cavillings how carefully I have looked into your essay from all points. I have barely room to thank you for the others, both of which I have read with much interest, and to add that I send you by this post my own copy of the Tombeau de Théophile Gautier, as I should like my share in that book to come under the eyes of an American poet and scholar with at least *some* of the mispunctuations, etc., corrected which would have drawn some thunder and lightning from Landor on the head of the French printer and all his nation. As among so many contributors there is of course great inequality, I have taken on myself to mark the best among the contents; there are pretty verses elsewhere, but those I have marked are really fine pieces of workmanship. Against one expression I could not resist setting a note of admiration as the most hopelessly unintelligible piece of jargon I ever saw in any language, and written on the most luminous of all poets!

I see you share the general opinion as to the "utter uselessness" of modern Latin (and a portion I suppose of modern Greek) verses; I think it depends on the execution. Good verse of any kind at any time is a good thing, and a change of instrument now and then I think is good practice for the performer's hand. I certainly care very little about the matter, and should never think seriously of claiming place or notice for any but my English or French poems (the latter I do consider part of my serious work);

but Landor was so much pleased with my first copy of elegiacs addressed to him that I might have some excuse if I were vainer of them than I think I am; and my friend and former tutor Mr. Jowett, the Oxford Professor of Greek and Master of the leading college there, has expressed a very gracious and flattering approval of these on Gautier, and notably of the Latin choriambics. I confess that I take delight in the metrical forms of any language of which I know anything whatever, simply for the metre's sake, as a new musical instrument; and as soon as I can am tempted to try my hand or my voice at a new mode of verse, like a child trying to sing before it can speak plain. This is why without much scholarship I venture to dabble in classic verse and manage to keep afloat when in shallow water.

I hope the book (with Landor's pamphlet inside it) will reach you safely; I shall be curious to know what you think of it; and if there should be any notice taken of it in any American journal or magazine I should very much like to see it. (This really is not a hint or insinuated petition begging for such notice at your hands or any one's, and must not be taken as such; but I am curious about the fate of this book as a unique sort of production in these days, and take certainly a quite unselfish interest in its fortunes.) I am very glad you like my elegy on Baudelaire; I wrote it with very sincere feelings of regret for the poor fellow's untimely loss, which gave it a tone of deeper thought or emotion than was called forth by the death of Gautier, with whom (though from boyhood almost his ardent admirer) I never had any correspondence; but in spite of your kind mention of it in this month's *Scribner's Magazine* which I have just seen I cannot believe it worthy to tie the shoes (so to speak) of the least, whichever may be the least, of the great English triad or Trinity of elegies—Milton's, Shelley's, and Arnold's. I am content if it may be allowed to take its stand below the lowest of them, or to sit meekly at their feet.

I have just finished and am about at once to publish the longest and most important poem I have yet attempted—a historic drama of almost epic proportion; but I have no time or room to try your patience further.

From Moncure D. Conway.

51 Nottinghill Square, February 24, 1874.

It must bear an appearance of ingratitude that I have not acknowledged before this the pleasure you have given me and my wife,—and the honour,—in sending your poems. But really the postponement has been in the effort to read and appreciate before returning thanks. Take this little "grace after meat," then, and allow me to say, not of faith but knowledge, that no poetry that I have received from America since I have been in Europe has impressed me so much by its artistic finish and its grace as yours. "Alice of Monmouth" is a poem for which I desire to see some tribute worthy of what is almost a unique American production. And I have a special thanksgiving, too, in my heart for "The Ordeal by Fire."—I congratulate you on having gained such a good form, also; the book is very pretty, and a capital one to carry with one. I am reserving a good deal of it for the Summer seaside.

From Bayard Taylor.

Rome, February 24, 1874.

We reached here on Saturday evening, and the next morning I found your package. (E. B. B., Landor, Hood, Arnold, etc., the Dartmouth Ode, and Macd.'s article.) I read every line of all of them before I went to bed that evening, and it is long since anything has so thoroughly refreshed me. Your three prose papers are admirable. I like your tone and manner better than Lowell's: it is less discursive, betrays no personal prejudices, and has that ripe sympathetic quality which belongs to true criticism. The E. B. B. and the Landor, having more unity, *seem* the finer; but, critically speaking, your analysis of Matthew Arnold seems to me best of all. I have rarely read anything of the kind, so delicate and so just. I *know* these articles must have made a strong impression, and will advance your position near enough to breach the enemy's walls. The Ode is capital in form,—a little unequal (which is next to inevitable), partly because the informing idea doesn't quite solder into one piece the different parts, but always dignified and serenely finished. The best parts are "Ærea Proles," "Youth and Age" and "Atlantis Surgens." The passage beginning

"When the veil from the eyes is lifted"

is simply perfect. It is like, and yet unlike, the best things of Shelley. You have never achieved a sweeter rhythmical passage.

Many, many thanks for sending me the package! It satisfies me that your best day, like my own, is yet to come.

. . . .

Meanwhile, hold fast to your faith—but I know you will!—"the Present is ours," and the Present secures the Future. I expect to meet Boker at Naples this week. Now, good-night, old friend, and good luck to all your labors.

To his Mother.

New York, February 8, 1874.

If I did not suppose that, after all, you derived no less gratification from writing to me than from receiving my hurried letters, I should not permit you to exert yourself with the composition of an epistle so long and interesting as yours of the 4th. For it is impossible for me to reply in kind. My brain is so *sore*, nowadays, that I can't get through my regular *work*. I can feel its *writhings and convolutions*, and at last am a little scared myself. You know I've always told you that I knew when to stop, and I'm now going to prove it. To-day I've come to a sudden conclusion that I must snap right off, straightway, or break-down, and to the further resolution to sail for Florida, and anywhere thereafter as may seem best, by the end of the present week. You will probably say, after all, that I deserve no credit, but am *driven to*—when I tell you that I failed on my Tennyson article for April, and find myself too *nervous* to write it all. Setting down the rude first draft, at odd hours, has nearly crazed me. The most I can do is to write *half* for May, and half for June. Gilder must have the first moiety in three weeks. I shall write it at leisure, *en voyage*, *etc.*, and mail it to him. As I shall take no other work, it won't hurt me. Christmas I had only $800. in the world; have since worked courageously in stocks, and made some thousands, and *can* leave. But the effort has been great; and reputation, etc., have brought me social inflictions that give me no time, in the "height of the season" for writing. I have no time to eat, sleep, or write, and am going to say "I am sick," and *run away*. Shall leave everything in Fred.'s and Laura's hands, and go before I am *really* ill. So you needn't worry about me. Howells, you know, has the "Gale" poem. Saw Osgood last night. He says they are going to print again, on my book. The "Victorian Poets" goes over till Autumn, '75. 'Tis too bad I haven't the *physique* to make money and write both—as most men have. Ill-health *always* steps in when I'm getting ahead. I always was a rickety half-baked manikin, anyhow. . . . I have letters from Bayard Taylor, and from Swinburne. Will show you all by and by. Have re-rented our flat for '74—at a "raise" of $5. per month!

To C. D. Warner.

February 13, 1874.

I have been to see Mr. Bunce, and have arranged with him concerning the mode and tense of my article upon C. D. W. To-morrow I sail for Florida, as much to get away from this whirlpool, and get some time to finish some overdue literary work, as for my health—although the latter is just where it won't do to insult it any longer. Wouldn't I enjoy the Florida trip, if I hadn't several skeleton-articles at my feast!—Have closed up all my stocks, at a profit which enables me to foresee six months of writing and fishing!!!!!

To his Mother.

Jacksonville, Fla., February 25, 1874.

I am indebted to you for your two welcome letters—of the 17th and 21st—and if I acknowledge them together, and at no great length, it is because I have more writing than I really ought to do, and find that even the pleasure of corresponding with those whom I love the best taxes my nervous and physical strength. My first Tennyson article must go North this week, and it really *pulls me down* to write it. Each day the work comes harder, and is a constant dread. I *never was made* for what is called "sustained effort." I succeed in it only by an unnatural and unhealthy *tour de force*. You are perfectly right in saying that I ought to have no work here with me; and I feel it when all around me are engaged in rest or pleasure. But you know that I came away to work, and must not be tempted. When the "Victorian Poets" are done (it is a long job yet!) I *never again* shall undertake a literary project that will force me to work when I don't feel like it. An article more than "three days long," *even if I write only two hours a day*, gets on my mind, spoils my sleep, worries me for fear it will not be completed, spoils all my hours of idleness, and *invariably* makes my lungs sore.

General Van Alen begs me to go with him on a month's sporting cruise up Indian River, in his yacht, and how I would like to! But I can't and shan't. I *would* like to write a few superb letters to the *Tribune*, but they are not to be thought of, as I can hardly answer the letters which follow me even here from well-meaning friends, brokers, authors, etc.

. . . My first article will end on Saturday, and then I shall *rest a week*, before commencing the second; and go to Magnolia, Palatka, etc.—then, possibly, return, and go to St. Augustine for a fortnight, to write the other. The climate is delicious: we have had two or three very hot days, but to-day it is cool again. There is too much society here for my work. The fare is so good at this house, that many stop right here for months, and Jacksonville, in the back-streets is a pretty, deep-shaded town. . . .

Shall *try* to see some of your friends ere my return, but have no time nor chance at present. Am pulled and hauled too much already, and must find a less populous region, where my name is unknown. I wish we *could* join you at Morristown this summer, but how can I live with neither sailing nor fishing to tempt me to open-air and exercise? One can do *nothing* out-doors, except walk and ride, in Morristown—of all places in the world. I need *hard* out-door exercise and recreation. Should smoke myself to death there. All my plans are unformed, however, nor do I even know what I shall yet do in Florida. Shall probably return North by land, and possibly stop at Augusta, Richmond, Washington, etc. If Laura sends you my letters, please return them to her. Howells in the *Atlantic*, and somebody in the *Galaxy* tear my "Cameos" to pieces, which makes me feel blue. *Christian Union* and *Harper's* praise my poems. Society, of which you speak, has been essential to my plans this Winter.

Completing the first installment of the Tennyson essay, Stedman wrote some pressing letters, and then gave himself to recreation, sailing and walking with new found friends. Among these was Dr. Seth Rogers, who he says is "a splendid man, a born healer, and a thinker: his friends are Bartol, Wasson, and others of the Emerson school." In his walks, Stedman explored nooks of interest, near and remote, as was characteristic of him upon visiting any new place. His planned trip to St. Augustine was made by water. Of it he writes: "Have agreed to take a rather 'skittish' voyage: To take General Van Alen's yacht down the river, across the bar, thence by sea forty miles to the St. Augustine bar, cross, and go to St. Augustine. (March 3) Got off at ten A. M. in *La Belle Helène*. Head wind. All day tacking. Reached the Light at midnight, and all slept on the floor in a cottage. (March 4) Cross the frightful St. John's bar with some peril. Wind S. W. and fresh clear weather. Left bar at nine A. M. and bore away S. S. E. from St. Augustine. Made the run (40 miles) to St. Augustine bar, in five hours. Surf so high that we stood off and on not daring to cross at low water. Finally, made a despairing push for it, and went over at three P. M. Touched sand, and shipped one or two seas, but got through, and had enough of it! Quarters at 'Magnolia House.' (March 5) Attended Mass at Cathedral. Fine old Spanish town. Everything lovely but my infernal chest. Hunting for Howland Pell. Wrote Professor Moses Coit Tyler thanking him for *Christian Union* review. (March 7) The *Nation* gives me the first fair review it ever awarded any book of mine: and even this is sour and carping. Met Miss Constance F. Woolson and walked with her. Plucked oranges from a tree for the first time in my life, and ate them."

The heat had annoyed him, but the day following his arrival at St. Augustine the thermometer fell 30°, therefore, feeling a trifle better, he began Part II, of his Tennyson essay, upon which he made rapid strides, working steadily in the morning, sailing with Mr. Pell, or walking out on the pine barrens, or along the sea wall, with Miss Woolson, in the afternoon. Of this latter friend, he says, "Rarely have met so gentle, earnest, and brilliant a woman." By the middle of March he had completed his essay, which he regarded as "the best paper I have yet written—I am sure." This opinion was substantiated when the essay was published. Aldrich wrote: "I think your Tennyson paper the best of the series; you have left nothing for anyone else to say." "Your paper on Tennyson," said C. D. Warner, "is broad, philosophical, insighty. I tell you I am really proud that *we* are beginning to do such strong and genuine criticism in America." And from the Southern poet, Paul H. Hayne:

> I have *long* desired to write you, to make your *epistolary* acquaintance, even if *Fate* wills it that I should never make your *personal* acquaintance. And yet how narrowly I missed the *latter* pleasure! When the news came that you had passed through *Augusta* on your way from *Florida*, I'm afraid that my imprecations upon the damnable luck which prevented our meeting, were neither few nor carefully chosen. However, "none of us are stronger than Destiny!"
>
> The *immediate* occasion of my writing is this: I have just finished a very *particular* study of your papers upon the Poets of the Victorian epoch, etc., Browning, Tennyson, etc.
>
> The *rare* instruction, the *keen* delight your essays have afforded me, I *dare* not, just now, put into detailed expression; because you would think me extravagant, and a flatterer. But *one* thing I *must* say. These critiques are *unrivalled* in philosophic insight; and a genuine appreciation of every light and shade of the higher imagination. Only a *Poet* could have written them, endowed with that faculty some Poets lack; I mean, the acutest *analytical* perception.
>
> *Such* critiques *must* live. They must take their place in the permanent literature of the language. Many of your poems, too, have greatly charmed me. Chief among them, I place, as no doubt you do yourself—the narrative poem of *The Blameless Prince.* I never read certain portions of that sad and truly dramatic story without a moisture in the eyes, and a "sweet pain" at heart. I wish to Heaven you would compose other narrative poems like it. Your genius is *so* pronounced in that department of Art.
>
> And then *how* I have relished some of your translations from the Greek! Excepting Leigh Hunt (and *your* translations are far closer than his), I know of no scholar who seems so thoroughly to have entered into the *spirit*, the essential mind and being of Theocritus!
>
> My admiration, Dear Sir, is a free-will offering; as sincere as *sincerity itself.* Why should not artists occasionally communicate with each other, exchange views, encourage and uphold each

other? For myself, I occupy but a humble position; yet I *can* appreciate *others*, (thank God!) with my whole heart and soul.

Have you any new work in contemplation? If so, please inform me. I should be proud to do all I can, (as the Literary Correspondent of several southern journals), to advance your literary interests in this section of the Land.

Our people are almost dead to *Art*, I fear; still something might be accomplished.

After shipping various boxes of fruit and figs to friends in New York, Stedman started homeward from St. Augustine by way of Jacksonville, Savannah, and Augusta—at which place he heard Saxe lecture, and where he called on the poet Randall. Despite his efforts, his health did not improve. "Am not feeling well at all," he says, "my lungs are permanently weak and I may as well make up my mind to it. I suppose I ought to be thankful that I am still alive." Leaving Augusta, he went on to Richmond, thence to Washington, *en route*, working hard on an article about Whitelaw Reid, which he was very anxious to finish. For a few days in Washington he was able to revisit old comrades, then his strength gave away so completely that he had to go to bed. "Am very ill," he writes, "and in despair. Am willing to die, and could be better spared than when my boys were younger: but this slow lingering pain and impotence for work. Bristed was right—they ought to *kill* chronic and hopeless invalids. Should go home at once, were I well enough, and could I keep my return secret a week or two, and if it were not so cool." His plucky spirit would not let him rest beyond a day in bed, then he struggled up to receive and to visit comrades, and to attend to some important letters, in aid of friends. But he felt miserable and blue at his hotel; when, after a few more days, his temperature grew high, his old friend, Mr. Coffey, insisted that Stedman must come to his house. While there a reporter gained admittance to Stedman, and the poet, remembering his old newspaper days, gave the young man some observations upon literature and literary men, voicing his opinion that New York was becoming the literary center of the country; that American literature was becoming metropolitan instead of sectional. "The New England school of literature," he is chronicled as saying, "centering in Boston has been a brilliant one, marked by originality and power, but it has been a feature of a single generation, not destined to be succeeded by another of equal importance. Just as the literary center shifted from Edinburgh to London, the true metropolis, so now it is shifting from Boston to New York." Seven years later, referring to this last sentence, Mr. Stedman says, "This was the first time that this idea or 'conceit' was mooted. I set it going." The "conceit" called forth a vigorous defense from Bostonians. "Gad," says Aldrich, explaining to Stedman that he was not responsible for certain comments, "these Bostonians are not thin-skinned on the subject—they haven't any skin at all!" [1]

The middle of April, "feeble enough," Stedman arrived home again. The very next day he set himself at work clearing off his accumulated letters of whose nature the following note is an example: "Loaned poor F—— $125. It came 'like drawing teeth,' but his sick wife must reach Scotland. Then had to give money to old Clapp." He finished also the article on Mr. Reid. "Am glad," he says, "to do this much for one who has been my loyal comrade and unfaltering friend." This article completed a group of four which he had set himself to write before he should be free to work upon the remaining essays for his "Victorian Poets."

To his Mother.

New York, May 13, 1874.

Do you remember? This was the day of Charley's death! My dear, dear, only brother. I reproach myself that I had forgotten it, till I wrote the above date, intending to answer a letter after the turmoil of the day—I cannot write that other letter without speaking to some one of our poor, brave, heroic Charley. He toiled and died for my sake, and for that of my children; he left all his little property to us—it seemed like death-money—I could hardly touch it. But it did what he meant it should—in some way it helped to give me a start, and I never have been *distressed* for bread since that sorrowful hour, as I often was before it. It was too cruel, his death! Such a useless, unnecessary tragedy! I can never forgive those who sent him to it—nor myself for permitting it. And yet I was powerless. He was worth *fifty* of any man I know, in certain qualities, and would have proved this might he but have lived. What a loss to us all, and, above all, to me his brother—who have needed his love and aid ever since! Somehow, I never can reconcile myself to the story of his life and death. The loss seems more useless, more pathetic, more irreparable, with every recurring year.

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[1] A later authority says: "The *Literary World*, of Boston, frankly gives up 'Literary Boston.' It has faded away. We have no sort of idea that its counterpart will reappear. No man's place is filled when he leaves it by another. No one literary group of one generation will be exactly repeated in the next. The waters of the intellectual life swirl and eddy, and the movement of yesterday is not the movement of to-day, nor will the movement of to-day be that of to-morrow. Where the next literary center will be none can tell."

But I do not want to make you sad. It is not often that I express my *feelings*, as you know.

Your letter came to-night. Am glad you have seen Bret Harte—and hope Clementine will meet him, as I wrote to him of her being a Californian. Will try to find his beautiful story—"The Rose of Tuolumne" for you. If the paper is not destroyed, will enclose it. . . .

I assure you I can get along perfectly well without city excitements. My chief trouble is the immense number of commissions people send me—friends, strangers, etc. Upon my word, I haven't met with a courtesy in the South, that I haven't already had to pay for: five letters from Washington, asking help, literary and otherwise, in one day! Shall be driven away from New York by this sort of thing, in the end. My *work* drives me frantic—not town-pleasures. The latter I've no time to enjoy. *My health continues to improve.* Am quite well.

To W. D. Howells.

New York, May 17, 1874.

After Mr. Scudder's rather small and sneering echo of your jest with regard to "complete editions" (—you see how far a good word goes—) I feel smaller, writing to a Boston man, than the worm to which "Pip's" patron compared himself. But let us forget that I am in New York, and you Down-East, for I wish to have a friendly word with you in regard to a purely literary matter. While I was in Florida I received two rather careful notices of "Cameos"—the little gift-book edited by Aldrich and myself. One was from the *Galaxy*, the other from the *Atlantic*. The former treated the editors of "Cameos" with great contempt, yet did not displease me, because it spoke well of Landor and seemed to think the poet deserved a better fate, etc. Your notice, on the contrary, was friendly, more than kind, to Tom. and to myself, and evidently most honestly written. Yet it gave me pain and surprise—so much of both, indeed, that I then and there resolved to write you or talk with you concerning it. As I took my overdue work South with me, and have just caught up with it, I have had no opportunity to do either.—I cannot expect my friends to have my tastes; am not so narrow and provincial as *that;* nevertheless you, of all living men, chance to be the one to whom I should most confidently have pointed: First, for a GENUINE acquaintance with Landor's more important works; second, for that admiring appreciation of them which almost inevitably follows.

To touch upon points as they occur to me: first, concerning the trifle, "Rose Aylmer," about which so much fuss is made. Let me say that it is wrongly printed (from an incorrect Edition) in "Cameos," where it appears in *two* stanzas—each ending with a full stop. Landor wrote it thus:

"Ah, what avails the sceptred race!
  Ah, what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
  Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
Rose Aylmer! whom these wakeful eyes
  May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
  I consecrate to thee!"

An eight-line stanza, you see, with an exclamation-point over the repetition of "Rose Aylmer"—a cry of grief and pathos. No one knows better than yourself the effect of a very slight technical change in poetry or music. Of course this is not a great poem, but it has effects peculiarly its own, and is perfect so far as it goes. Besides, when an old man of the world consecrates a night of memories and sighs to a slip of a girl he knew in youth, instead of taking the sleep which health, custom, and worldly-wisdom demand, it is all that her ghost can expect of him—and makes no anti-climax to the poem. You say rightly that "the world, after all, is a wise old head, and does not overlook its good things." Now the English-reading world, both snobs and commonplace, has agreed to love this little poem—and there must be some sort of quality or charm within it. I first saw it, years ago, quoted in an editorial by Curtis (I think)—who did not name the author—and it instantly struck me. I learned it by heart, and wondered who wrote it. Was familiar, at College, with Landor's larger works, but never had read his life or heard of "Rose Aylmer." Had also read his *Hellenics*, but not his minor lyrics. But let this trifle pass. In such trifles much *is* due to charm of "melody or movement," aside from what "veritable poetic substance" they contain. This has both, *me judice*.

What I have to complain of in your review is that it seems to forget the important matter to which the editors of "Cameos" refer again and again, *viz.* that the tiny lyrics, quatrains, etc., in that book, are of no earthly account in comparison with Landor's larger work; that, among other gifts, he had a faculty for throwing off these delicate *fancies*—and that we brought some of them together for a dainty gift-book, and hoping that they might tempt ordinary readers to examine his greater poetry and prose, just as a miner, prospecting, is led by scattered gold-dust to the main "lead." You take them as the measure of his genius—but the latter was of great and *various* range, almost universal, and this is not a fit application of the rule *ex pede Herculem.*

When, also, you take it for granted that Landor is not generally liked, I think you assume too much. Very few of the graver and larger poets, belonging, like him, to another time than our own, are more generally read and admired by well-read people. Some famous poets are more talked about than read—even Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Wordsworth. Landor's readers are steadily increasing in number and influence. I have no doubt it is "a fashion" with many to affect Landor,—can well understand that it may be so in certain sections where every schoolgirl reveres the Orphic oracles, etc. In fact, I perceive and feel what you mean. But in ordinary circles, where literary and art-affectations hardly exist,—where people are so busy, and so worldly, that they only read, or listen to music, for *the love of it*—Landor is read and enjoyed. I have enjoyed him, and *learned much* from him, since I was a boy at Yale, without suspecting myself of affectation; or thinking myself less likely to be correct in my opinion of Landor than in my opinion of Byron or Tennyson. To be sure, I read his *Hellenics*, chiefly, in youth, because I was not *up to* his prose. As I grow older, I see more and more, both good and bad, wise and faulty in the astonishing comprehensive prose dialogues—which form the bulk of his writings. When you come to his poetry, you are the only poet I ever have known who doesn't admire it and understand its remarkable influence on literature. His blank verse was a model for Keats and others who have formed the verse of to-day. He was not *behind his time* in art but *ahead of it.* He never wrote "whole epics." He wrote one short epic, if you choose to call it so, which has been more read by poets than any "epic" *between* Milton and Tennyson. He did write the exquisite, interesting, idyllic, lasting, *Hellenics*. May I ask you if you ever have read them, without subjecting myself to the censure which an "American essayist" justly deserved, for asking a flower-painter, "Excuse me, Miss ———, but do you *know* the fringed gentian?" It is quite possible that you have not Landor's works (the 2 vol. 8vo. collections) and are not really familiar with "The Hamadryad" (so superior to Lowell's *Rhœcus*, as he himself declares.) "Thrasymedes," "Chrysaor," and the spirited modern XVth Hellenic. These are the prototypes of all modern poems like "Œnone."—Of course you know "Pericles and Aspasia" and "The Pentameron"—but it well may be that you have neglected, in the business of life—especially in your own press of charming original composition, the *Imaginary Conversations*. If so, take an opportunity to read "Bishop Burnet and Sir Humphry Hardcastle," "Marchese Pallavicini and Landor," "General Kléber," etc., (by way of specimen-naming.)

One thing more. I quite agree with you that a man must be his own contemporary—must ally himself with his own time. Now Landor was the most impetuous, active politician and man of affairs, during his prime, conceivable, and more *than half his writings* relate to matters of the day. His live interest in live men and things injured him, in fact, as a thinker and poet. Wherever he speaks of the *antique* it is to decry the utter uselessness of attempting to repeat it in our day. He was a "reformer" in his crazy way, pushing ahead, looking ahead—a radical, democratic, unconventional man of action. Emerson says he was cut out for a soldier.

But enough. Forgive me for thinking that possibly you had formed a general idea of Landor in your mind without thoroughly knowing his larger work—great and faulty as it is. I know that I myself have that kind of knowledge of many great authors whom you know by heart—German, Italian, etc.; also, that while such knowledge, in men like you and me, is generally near right, it is sometimes near wrong. In my Landor paper of two years ago, I went very *fully* into his greatness and weakness, and touched upon every point you make in your review. You once told me that you had not read that article—and in a manner that implied you didn't intend to. Let me convince you that I am thinking more of a great thinker gone than of myself, when I lower my pride and ask you to take some spare half-hour and look over my non-eulogistic summary of his characteristics and works.

But, on the other hand, if you tell me that you *have* read the *Hellenics*, the *Conversations*, etc.; why, then, I have not another word to say, except to claim that some people like Landor's work who are not "affected."

This long letter requires no answer. I had to clear away a hundred short ones, replying to those accumulated during my absence, before I could get to it. Its length shows how much I was surprised that *you*, my friend, judged Landor by that volume of trifles, and seemed resolved not to like him in any case.

I thought of writing you, and enclosing my letter to Aldrich to deliver. On reflection, it seems to me that I ought not to do this—even with my co-editor and our common friend—without consulting you. But if *you* have no objection, let him see it.

To R. R. Bowker.

New York, June 4, 1874.

I will not leave town without first saying how much you have touched me by your friendly and penetrative notice of my poems. The latter adjective is used advisedly, for many of your expressions show that your instinct has penetrated to the motives of my work, and to something of my feelings and experience in the past. I am indebted to a fortunate accident, viz: that of a trip to Boston, for my knowledge of your review in the *Christian Leader*.

My publishers showed it to me, as one of a surprising mass of criticisms, wise or otherwise, and I was at once attracted not only by its admirable style, but also by certain points made—to which I have already referred. Returning home, I spoke of it to my wife, who said—"Why that, of course, is the review which, I told you, Mr. Bowker has written!"

Perhaps it is enough for me to say that I appreciate it fully, not only receiving encouragement from its literary value, but feeling a deeper gratification in the knowledge that these random songs of mine have won me the good word and sympathy of such a friend.

You know we are advised to "recruit" our friendships as we grow older, and to select our comrades from the ingenuous ranks of those who are younger than we are. Without laying claims to being an antediluvian, I heartily confess that among the most pleasant experiences of the last year has been the fact that it has entered upon "my list of friends" two or three of the rising men: fellows with pure hearts and brave aspirations—whose very faces are a stimulant to an older and somewhat wearied craftsman.

To C. D. Warner.

Bethel Hill, Me., July 3, 1874.

Bless your soul, my dear fellow; don't you know that I haven't been in New York for three weeks, and hope not to be there again till the leaves are yellow? Your warm-hearted letter, which adds another pleasure to the one I already have enjoyed in writing that sketch, finds me in this mountain-village—where I am catching 75 trout every other day, and *pretending* to write at least two days of the week. In spite of your friends of the *Nation*—who once said that I had the usual feeling for Nature that a city man has, who gets a week's country-vacation each year—I was brought up in the country, and have kept myself poor, all my life, because I *will* have every Summer to myself in the wilderness. You know it costs a heap of money to get here, and here we stay until our Autumnal return to New York. It was a real "cross" that I couldn't reach Hartford last Winter, and we shall not feel satisfied next November until we have passed a day or two at your home—but until then, as Weller said to Mr. Winkle, "it can't be done."

I envy you your trip to Concord. If my funds hadn't run low, I should have gone to the Massaschuetts sea-coast this season, instead of to Bethel; and, in such case, should have made a pilgrimage to see Whittier—and then visited Concord to see Emerson, Alcott, Sanborn, etc. None of these men have I ever met. Mr. Sanborn recently wrote me a very original and manly letter, and I should like to know him personally.

That you find no fault with my sketch is a great satisfaction. The facts are taken pretty closely from authority, as you know. As for the opinions, favorable or adverse, they are thoroughly honest—and I have tried to draw a likeness of you and of your works, just as they have struck me. The thing to do in such a sketch, is to get in the subject's *individuality*—which, in your case, is so peculiar and subtile, that I had to capture and define an *aroma*.

To Whitelaw Reid.

Bethel Hill, Me., July 25, 1874.

Like most other N. Y. journalists I have been no admirer of Tilton. His manners used to seem to me, in my struggling days, patronizing, offensive, unbearable. While I saw he was a born writer and speaker, I disliked his cant and sentimentalism. You need not suspect me of any overt or covert league with him or his set, in consequence of what I am about to say.

Owing to the dramatic aspect of this case, and the field it proffers for intellectual analysis, I have made a close study of it from the outset. Nothing which has appeared up to date has escaped my strict and, I believe, impartial scrutiny. And I am amused that you should create such a host of sympathizers for Tilton by the persistent brutality and unfairness with which you treat his case,—in fact, with which you misreport the progress of it. It may end in a reaction in his favor. Grant that he is unmanly, sickly, cowardly—dog, if you choose—even a cowardly dog has *rights*, and may have truth on his side. When you *abuse* the opposite client to such an extent, the outside public almost suspect he *has* truth on his side. You really make friends for him. He has been attacked in advance of his charges, and after his charges—attacked all through—and yet there are frightful things to be explained before the matter can be hushed or settled.

That was a fine editorial in which your writer speaks of the "personality of Beecher, dwarfing every other feature in the case"—of the "greatest pulpit since Paul preached on Mars Hill," etc. Nothing could be stronger, truer, more impressive. But nothing can be more absurd than the leader of the 24th which says "In a case where the word of Mr. Tilton is opposed by the word of Mr. Beecher, *it is a mere waste of time to call other witnesses!*" Let me say that everything, even to the clearing of Beecher's character, depends on other witnesses, and the people so see it. Unless Mr. Moulton and others say that Beecher did *not* confess to adultery, the *whole newspaper press* cannot save the great preacher. Great men fall through their own sins: their ignoble foes and informers are merely God's instruments of detection.

Suppose, for one moment only, that Beecher did seduce Mrs. Tilton; that many people know it; that he afterwards lied, in self-defence, to crush his injured and unpopular friend; that now all the great and mighty of Plymouth Church, Beecher, the newspaper-press, etc., unite to suppress the truth and utterly annihilate the poor outraged fool T. T.—if such a case were possible, would not a frightful sin have been committed, worse even than that of which you accuse Tilton? And I have studied general laws, and observed affairs, to little advantage, if I have not learned that sooner or later it would be followed by a doubly horrible exposure and retribution on all parties concerned. The rule is inevitable—inflexible. I am not, like you, a member of an orthodox society,—am not a Calvinist; but I believe in God, in a quiet way, and that no great wrong can work a right.

Even your material interest in this matter, with regard to the prospects and circulation of the *Tribune*, in *the long run* would not be helped by prejudgment of this case: they would be injured by intentional warfare against the truth. In any event, I repeat that you already are making a martyr of Tilton.—You see that for once I am not afraid to say unpalatable things, (though Tilton's luck shows that "a man's manners make or mar his fortune") yet I trust you will ever consider me as faithfully yours.

To his Mother.

Bethel Hill, Me., August 2, 1874.

Am writing on Browning, and fishing in these splendid woods on odd days. . . . Take all the good you can get in life, *from day to day:* That is the golden rule for people past forty—or under forty. I hope the Summer is as cool and delightful with you as with us. Still, we have too much rain—I think the earth *did* run through a *portion* of the comet's tail, and that the latter is chiefly hydrogen, which combined with the oxygen of our atmosphere and made all these floods. There's a theory for you! Unfortunately, it doesn't account for the Beecher-Tilton scandal. The *Tribune* has changed its course, since Reid got my letter. I told him he couldn't help Beecher by blackguarding Tilton, that the latter—if a dog—had his *rights*, that he couldn't cheat the public and would only make sympathy for T. T.—all which has more than come true. It is possible that B. is innocent, but all the great newspapers outside of New York, and the people generally, rebuke the dastardly New York press. What a dramatic affair, throughout. It might be treated on the plan of Browning's "Ring and the Book."

Have half written the Browning article—one of the longest, and, I think, the *deepest*, of the series. Am getting poor, and may start for New York any day "the market" shows signs of life, (leaving Laura here) for a fortnight's stock-*fishing!* You see "the market" is my Fortunatus' purse—whenever I need money, I go to it. Funny way of living, isn't it? The hotels here are full of commonplace people with the exception of our friends, the Groots. They had a little "Hop" last Wednesday evening. But it is good to be among fifty simpletons, not one of whom suspects you are a poet—or cares a snap about you, anywise.

Stedman worked steadily on his Browning essay, finishing the third and last copy by the middle of August. When it was published in *Scribner's*, several months later, his friend Constance F. Woolson wrote:

I believe I have read it ten times; and I know myself well enough to know that there is no limit to the number of times I shall go over it; for when I like a thing once I like it forever, whether it be tune, friend, or book. On the other hand there are not many things that I care for at all, the vast majority of tunes, friends, and books, being nothing to me; as I am to them. But, setting aside my love for Browning, the article seems to me superb in itself. I think I have never read, in English, (I say that because there is so exquisite a delicacy in some French reviews I have seen) anything in the way of criticism that equalled it; indeed it is more than criticism,—it is a study,—trenchant, profound, scintillating,—strong and clear as a lighthouse, which I am sure we need when sailing through the wild labyrinth of deeps and hidden rocks and storms which Browning's genius has created, a tempestuous ocean of poetry.

As a rule the critics annoy me by ignoring the greatness of an author and falling in a body upon some fault, comparatively trivial. But you understand the very breath of Browning's massive poetry;—even I, no critic, no poet,—can see that you entirely comprehend him, to begin with. To go on—has any one ever seen a more powerful grasping of a great subject? To end with—certainly there never was a more delicate touch in the lighter details, more keen analysis, more felicitous phrasing. Well, I can not half express in a letter all I feel, and it would weary you; but let me say that I am charmed,—and picture to yourself, as the French say, that copy of *Scribner's* lying on my toilette-table where I do my most prized reading, and myself poring over your pages the first thing in the morning, and the last at night. When the volume appears, I shall have it in better shape. I shall go over Landor, then; but, someway, I do not believe I can get excited over Landor.—That may come, however. I know next to nothing about him.

And from John Fraser, formerly the Editor of the *Arcadian*, in 1874 connected with the *Evening Star*, Glasgow, Scotland:

I finished reading your Browning this morning. It is the strongest of all your articles, and so cursedly impartial and critical that it made me angry at the same time that I could not help but admit its justice. It is one of the most trenchant, able, critical analyses I have ever read; indeed I can't at this moment remember reading anything so fine. And yet, as I have said, it made me feel angry. Can you guess why?

My dear Stedman, why pick a poor fellow's idol to pieces; and poke through its bony ribs, and expose the straw inside; and generally turn him inside out, and show what a humbug he is in spite of all his genius? Fore all the gods, O critic, I do not like it, partly because as one grows older the idols become so miserably few, and partly—as thou, most sapient of dissectors, hast doubtless divined already—because it reflects on one's own acuteness to find his ideals ruthlessly trampled in the dust.

That August day in the Maine woods, when Stedman completed his essay on Robert Browning, would have been an hour of rejoicing had not his strength again given away. A temporary despondency seized him; two days later, still sick, but with his pluck as always aroused, he "broke into" his Swinburne article. At this time, he felt impelled to send word to Blair Scribner, canceling a semi-agreement to write a "History of American Literature." "My health," he says, "won't permit me to undertake it, and to make a living besides to say nothing of writing poetry and prose. Would like to have had the job ten years ago—and have a clear idea just how it should be done."

To Louise C. Moulton.

Bethel Hill, Me., August 28, 1874.

Your picture is beautiful—a singularly fortunate one—I think, and we prize it highly. Some day I'll hand you a better one of myself than the mite which I sent you as a vignette. Your charming gift would sooner have been acknowledged, had I not been laid up with lameness which the gods, who "of our pleasant vices make instruments to scourge us," have inflicted upon me for killing so many trout. Writing has been a burden, and letters have given place to a magazine article which could not longer be delayed. The Browning will come out in the November *Scribner's*. Your suggestion with regard to "Pippa Passes" is admirably put. But in that play he is, it seems to me, really dramatic—so far as objectivity is concerned; while in the "Statue and the Bust" he makes his own comments. Besides, he doesn't seem to think the *love* (intrigue) of Sebald and Ottima any sin, nor does Pippa who rather envies them their good luck. The murder, which gives them an opportunity to make their love legal, breaks the spell. Nevertheless, whether he intends it or not, "Pippa Passes" does preach a powerful sermon against free-love: almost as strong an one as the Beecher-Tilton case. . . .

As to the "great social questions" which you propound, I am no more fixed than yourself—except that I am very clear of one thing, viz., that the difficulties which you suggest, in the way of easy and *respectable* divorce are inseparable from our immature social development—and will only disappear in a riper age, say five centuries from now, when the world shall be civilized and crowded, and new social and domestic organizations perforce exist. The mistake the reformers make is in trying to anticipate God's own time—to *substitute revolution for evolution.* Still, revolution is a *part* of evolution. Meantime, what should we do for dramatic studies, passion, and excitement, without crime, intrigue, guilt, disaster, etc.?—Do you wish all dramatic sorrows to be eliminated from Art? We writers owe a debt to the murderers, libertines, conspirators, etc. And so I say with Shakespeare—"Let (such things) thrive!" (P. S. But in other men's houses.)

Mrs. Groot has gone into the West and taken our daylight with her, the smiles that we love best. It is misery for me to stay here, in this superb fishing and hunting weather, and not to be able to go across the fields. So I am going back to town, *via* Boston—where I shall stop a day or two, touch at Newport, and so on to N. Y. Am bleached out again and mad about it. But have no cash left and must go at making some, whether N. Y. be warm or cold. . . .

Let me thank you for your excellent taste in selecting Constance Woolson's story for approval. Generous on your part, too. She has as much originality as Harte, and more versatility. A wonderful woman. Read her *Scribner's* story. Can she write a novel!

September 5, 1874, found Stedman back "on 'Change," with its vacillating market. On his journey home from the woods, he had stopped over at Boston, going out also to Mystic Park with his friend Mr. Benjamin Ticknor to see "Goldsmith Maid" trot against her own record. "She made," says Stedman, "2.14—the fastest yet known. Was on the judges' stand. Returned with Ben. Ticknor and passed night at his charming homestead near Jamaica Pond."

Within a week of his return to New York, in the midst of many social engagements, and visits from friends, for his own contentment, and as an offset to the business whirl, Stedman wrote several lyrics: in one, the "Song from a Drama," we find what is rare in Stedman, the influence of another poet:—

I know not if moonlight or starlight
  Be soft on the land and the sea,—

I catch but the near light, the far light,
  Of eyes that are burning for me;
The scent of the night, of the roses,
  May burden the air for thee, Sweet,—
'T is only the breath of thy sighing
  I know, as I lie at thy feet.

The winds may be sobbing or singing,
  Their touch may be fervent or cold,
The night-bells may toll or be ringing,—
  I care not, while thee I enfold!
The feast may go on, and the music
  Be scattered in ecstasy round,—
Thy whisper, "I love thee! I love thee!"
  Hath flooded my soul with its sound.

I think not of time that is flying,
  How short is the hour I have won,
How near is this living to dying,
  How the shadow still follows the sun;
There is naught upon earth, no desire,
  Worth a thought, though 't were had by a sign!
I love thee! I love thee! bring nigher
  Thy spirit, thy kisses, to mine.

In sending these poems to the *Atlantic*, at the request of its Editor, W. D. Howells, Stedman says:

Any one of these poems is at your service for the January number—in fact, either or all of them for the year '75, though very likely you may not care to use them. The shorter two I have finished up from memoranda, since you first wrote. I have a notion that the "Song" will not come back to me: it is the complement of "Stanzas for Music" in my book, which first appeared in *Scribner's*.

But I propose the Kearny lyric for the New Year's Number, as it is of a sort to be copied. Besides, you will have lots of high-and-mighty, metaphysical poetry from other men, and this will serve for a contrast. . . .

As to "The Skull in the Gold Drift" which is, or was, a serious effort at a strong poem, let me also say a word. I told you I'd nothing on hand—and neither had I, except this, which I did not mean to show. The fact is that I wrote it four years ago, and flattered myself it was a fine thing. The idea was suggested by a scientific discovery, and by a careful editorial in the New York *Times*. Just after my poem was finished and on the point of going to you—I found, to my amazement (and vexation) that Bret Harte had made some comic verses on the same, or a similar, theme. Probably I could also have got some fun out of it, but, having elected to treat it *au serieux*, I put my work away, saying—So much for nothing! But occasionally a friend has seen it and urged me to print it. Time having elapsed, you shall decide whether I had better, or not. I have rewritten the opening.

From his "The Skull in the Gold Drift" take this noble stanza:

Beneath our feet a thousand ages moulder,
  Grayer our skies than thine, the winds more chill;
Thine the young world, and ours the hoarier, colder,
  But Man's unfaltering heart is dauntless still.
And yet—and yet like thine his solemn story;
  Grope where he will, transition lies before;
We, too, must pass! our wisdom, works, and glory
  In turn shall yield, and change, and be no more.

From Constance F. Woolson.

ASHEVILLE, September 28, 1874.

After three nights without sleep and three days of wearisome travelling including the "last straw" in the shape of a twenty-five mile stage-ride over the Blue Ridge, I yet read that long letter of yours within ten minutes after my arrival, hat and gloves still on!—Doesn't that tell the story?—Now that I am back in this quaint old Eagle Hotel, with a bright fire burning on the little hearth, and the simple-minded Moravian family, who are our hosts, coming and going with their primitive questions and ways, I am half inclined to believe the New York visit a dream. I don't know how to express to you my sense of the great kindness I received from Mrs. Stedman and yourself during this visit. But you are only carrying out and on the same remarkable kindness you have steadily shown ever since our short acquaintance at St. Augustine.

Nobody begins to do so much for me as you do. I have been really touched by it, and you seem to me the most generous person in the world, when, with all your crowding duties, plans, cares, and occupations you still find time to give me so much aid.—I only want to find fault with you in one little thing; you must give up the notion that I have any satire about me, at least in what I say. I have none. When I ask you a question, I ask for information *pur et simple*. You have a way of looking at me sometimes as though you doubted whether I spoke in good faith. I should not object to possessing satire if nature had given it; but she has not,—I found that out long ago. One does not like to be misjudged, you know.

I think you ought to be a very happy man, for you have such a delightful home. Many times on the long way down here I thought of those rooms and all their comfort and beauty; especially did I dwell on that little book-lined sanctum of yours. I never saw anything in the way of a home that so entirely suited *me;* there is just room enough for cosy comfort and no room for the terrible household care that wears out a woman's strength and lightheartedness.—I am glad that I met Mrs. Stoddard and Mrs. ———; but I could not help thinking that evening how glad *you* must be in your inmost soul that your wife was not a writer. How much prettier and lovelier a thousand times over was Mrs. Stedman in every motion, look and tone than the best we other three could do! What *is* the reason that if we take up a pen we seem to lose so much in other ways?—Mrs. ——— is "fine looking"; but—anyone would know she was literary. Why must it inevitably be so?—But perhaps it is "compensation"; as we gain money, or fame, just so surely must we lose that which in our hearts we prize a great deal more. . . .

I don't know any book I shall purchase with more satisfaction than this forthcoming one of yours; I am tired of carrying around the crumpled magazines containing the Tennyson and Browning (Madame) articles, and yet I won't leave them behind anywhere for I read them over often,—you would be surprised to know how often. I think I have always had a stronger taste for critical writings than for any other kind; ten years ago, for instance, I would read every one of the book-notices in the *Atlantic* before even looking at the stories. And "ten years ago" you know, we were supposed to like stories! . . .

To his Mother.

NEW YORK, October 8, 1874.

I feel so old and tired that if a wish were, on this day of all the year, to be granted me, I should say with Florence Percy—"Make me a child again, just for to-night!" Then I could be petted and caressed a little, and *you* could "Rock Me To Sleep," and feel yourself again the pretty, young Mother, who used to sing hymns to her baby-boy—in the Hartford dwelling, forty years ago. It is saddening, surprising—is it not?—how much more rapidly these milestones of life fly by us with every succeeding year. If there be no individual life for us in some other form and sphere, this brief sum of existence is an imposition upon beings who come into the world through no fault of their own. It is difficult to see why we should be given reason and hope, only to be deluded in the end. Such a course would not be honest on the part of a Supreme Being; yet the analogy of Nature, which He *has* given us powers to see and argue from, is wholly against immortality of the individual. Nature is always "careful of the type" and "careless of the single life." But one thing is certain—we cannot *help ourselves*—all I can do is to submit to the inevitable, to be content with what life I have and be thankful for what more may be in store for me. One thing I have yet to be thankful for—the dearest, most generous, most affectionate and young-hearted, of mothers. And here comes your lavish birthday gift, to make me *feel* "a child again" for this night, at least. I always devote *your* presents to some specific purpose, and in that way get the full value of them—independent of my business losses and gains. This money comes just in time to enable me to pay for my new suit, and for Arty's semi-annual schooling! I only trust it does not make *your* suits any the less. A hundred and fifty thanks, and my congratulations to you upon the fact that birthdays only come once a year. Otherwise you would soon impoverish yourself. Last year I managed to restrict you to $50. on October 8th. What did you do, but to treble the gift on Christmas! Now pray, dearest Mother, let this answer for both now and Christmas—as you really will distress me if you do not.

You will be glad to hear that to-night I have pretty much closed up my stock contracts, so as to get some weeks at home for writing. It was absolutely necessary, if I intend to have my book ready in time; as I have found it quite impossible to do any evening work this Fall. If ever I am fresh enough, and have no imperative engagement out, some one comes, whom I *must* see, and spoils my evening. So I am getting badly frightened in relation to my book—besides being obliged to shirk every order for a review or poem. Of course I *ought* also to be earning money every day, now, in Wall Street. But I *can't* serve God and Mammon together. Have made enough to last a couple of months, since my return, and as the activity in stocks shows symptoms of ending, I have closed up and shall go at writing.

Last night Warner and wife had their farewell reception at Mrs. Youmans, prior to sailing for Europe to-day. Of course we had to go—as he wrote me from Hartford he should expect to meet me. It really was a most *enjoyable* and select affair—only thirty guests. . . .

If I only could *live* by writing, keep well and strong, and have my evenings—like artists and novel-writers, I should have an easier time. But after passing twenty years in getting an honorable reputation, I can't go to writing "Gilded Ages." . . .

To W. D. Howells.

New York, October 21, 1874.

As I wrote you before, I am so busy here in town after long absence, that I don't get time to finish my books. Have declined two requests for (illustrated) Christmas poems this week. Your Manhattanese ballad has not occurred to me—nor could I write it to suit myself if it should. *Won't* I shake Parnassus—"when this cruel prose is over"—with the poetry now accumulating and anxious to get out!

I did make a little effort, and hoped my lyrics would do,—as they were not of the hackneyed descripto-suggestive sort. You *know* I can write correct, finished, æsthetic sonnets and quatrains,—can do it every day, but am tired of such work. Yet it would please me to sell the *Atlantic* a short poem now and then, as others do. Point out a few samples of what you do "like." Certainly not such things as——and——, which I am in doubt whether you print through kindness or as an act of ingenious malice against the authors.

Joking aside,—you have kindly accepted every long poem I ever have offered you, but Mr. Fields used to prefer my short lyrics, *and never made a failure with one.* I should like to have a poem in the *Atlantic* that could be "scissored." I think you made a mistake in returning the "Song from a Drama," and that you will like it when you see it in print elsewhere.

Don't you think we book-men, as editors, might profit by Browning's line—"He o'er-refines—the scholar's fault." I don't believe that either you or I would have printed "The Heathen Chinee," coming from an unknown author: it is so very different from the polished level of Miss Hunt, Mrs. Thaxter, etc. Yet it would have been a good thing to print.

Should not be surprised if you were right about the ending of "The Skull in the Gold Drift." Do me another favor, and suggest some way of changing it—so as to convey the same thoughts in a stronger way. One poet can often help another in such little matters.

The new *Atlantic* style of *advertising* (I suppose it is Scudder's) is admirable—and contrasts most favorably with the sprawling work of the man who does the publishing of *Scribner's*. Have been holding it up as a model to my friends at the latter office.

Entries in his diary are indicative of Stedman's life:

October 9, 1874. Resolved to stay at home and write for a month, and—broke my resolution by buying 100 Erie, on a telegraphic order, which fell this P. M.! In evening took Kate Field and Laura to the opera "Aida."

10. Paid for my change of purpose, by losing $175. on Erie—and served me right. But the loss is d——d awkward just now.

11. Have taken a pew in Frothingham's meeting-house—though I can ill afford it. We must have some one *to bury us*. The society are like myself, *free*-thinkers, and many of my friends are among them.

13. At home, writing on Rossetti. In evening visited the Gilders, poet and painter, in their artistic honeymoon-lodge.

15. Am worn down to a skeleton with nervous disease, and can't write.

29. In evening at meeting Yale Alumni Association. Met Ex-President Woolsey, who remembered me, and gratified me, as Bryant has, by urging me to go on with Theocritus. Said it was "too fine to be unfinished."

30. At home writing on Swinburne. The article bothers me.

He seems to me so fine a poet, and his works already are so voluminous that I must make it larger than I intended.

November 6. I am in despair, with 125 volumes of *minor* poets on my shelves to classify and review—for my chapter on "The Minnesingers." A frightful task, and I dream of them nights. Tis worse than the Temptation of St. Anthony.

14. At Kate Field's *début* in *Peg Woffington* (Booth's). The girl really made a wonderful success, all things considered—though the critics will not find it out yet as they cannot know the circumstances of the case. The most brilliant house, and trying ordeal I ever knew. Our stage box: Stoddards, Lusks, Stedmans.

16. Wrote Mrs. Bullard and Mrs. Groot to help Kate Field next Saturday. Wrote Kate Field to keep up her courage.

17. Wrote my long defence of Kate Field, against the most brutal criticism, took it at midnight to Reid and got it in.

December 4. Have been making a little money this week. Have written *every* evening on my "Victorian Poets" till midnight, and speculated *all day* downtown.

To W. D. Howells.

New York, December 7, 1874.

. . . I have read the closing chapters of "A Foregone Conclusion," having followed it along the *Atlantic*, and like it the best of all your books. Indeed it has been of curious interest to me to see your *gradual* but steady progress in *construction*—invention of plot and management of separate characters. This is a faculty which every schoolgirl seems to have, and which men of brains have to *train themselves* in by sheer force of intellect and practice. Each of your books has had a little more *story* to it, and this is a story throughout and therefore the best of all. Of course you had nothing to gain in style or insight of character. Something of this I wished (although very much occupied with my books, etc.) to say in *Scribner's*—having access to no other journal. I may as well say to you, since you know as well as I the merits and defects of the management, that my offer was declined with thanks, and that I don't think the book will be reviewed in that office. Epigrammatically speaking,

H. number I will not review
The poems of H. number II,
Because he can't defend 'em;

H. number II has nothing done
With novels of H. number I,
For fear he must commend 'em!
(Not by H. H.)

Please find proof enclosed.[1] As to the 6th stanza, if you are crowded for room take it out. It was the *first one written* of the poem, and therefore contains the *germinal* thought: to wit, what if there was a primeval world, *civilization*, luxury, learning, RELIGION, etc.; and what will become of our *Shakespeare*, *our* Christ, etc., when our world shall "leave not a rock behind." Some *specific* allusions are needed to bring the piece within general intelligence and sympathy. Some of Taylor's finest lyrics seem to me *too abstract.*

Am glad you speak as you do of Mrs. Piatt. I was one of her earliest "Pumblechooks," so to speak. But if she is best of women-poets, it is because the others are so bad and uncreative. *She* greatly lacks *clear vision* and *clear expression;* and, after all, poetry is a clear means of expressing clear imagination. Sometimes she is finely suggestive: has been hampered as a poet by constant domestic labors, etc., and besides—I don't think she and her husband help each other's style, but the reverse.

Augusta Webster[2] of England is a fine poet. (See her last volume.) *Some* of Miss Rossetti's shorter poems are better than any Mrs. Piatt has written. Our friend is best in poems about children—her themes and suggestions are all around her. She has fine *natural* genius.

To his Mother.

NEW YORK, December 13, 1874.

. . . It is so busy a time with me just now that I cannot write you as carefully as I wish to. Every *day* that I stay at home to write on my book costs me so much of my income—and every evening seems taken up with things I cannot and must not avoid. For instance, the *Atlantic Monthly* gives a grand dinner next Tuesday evening, in Boston, to all the contributors, old and new, from Emerson down. I am favored with an invitation, but am *compelled* to send a letter instead of myself, as I can't spare the two days needed to go and come, etc. It will be a notable affair,

[1] "The Skull in the Gold Drift."

[2] Am examining 150 minor poets of England—a nice job! [E. C. S.]

and I regret to miss the chance of seeing many fine authors whom I never have met. Besides, it will *tell against me*, not to be there. But this constant neglect of business for literature keeps me poor—and it is a *perfect marvel* that I make the good income I do. My expenses are very large, and yet I do meet them, and have something for charity and gifts.

Monday night I must be at the Forster Reception, Union League, as Mr. Cowdin took pains to get me tickets and will feel hurt if I'm not there. Thursday night I have a poem to read before the Yale Alumni meeting. Friday night, Dr. Holland's party: *must* go. Tuesday night (I forgot)—a dinner at Mr. Scribner's: *must* go. Somebody will come to see us on the only night left. How *can* I go to my business, answer my many letters and finish my book? Nor do I see that any of this pressure is my fault. I have not forgotten that your birthday will come on Friday, and had hoped to go out and see you. . . .

The New Year of 1875 found Stedman utterly worn down from his work. "Am greatly prostrated," he says, "and disheartened. One side numb, and almost palsied." "Head *wild*, cannot write. How *shall* I finish my book." "My disease seems to be a kind of neuralgic palsy of the left side and face. Could scarcely walk to-day and I am afraid of falling down." It gave him "the horrors" to read in the papers comments upon his health; he detested being ill, and was determined to struggle on. Toward the end of January his friend and physician "a noble fellow," Dr. William T. Lusk, prevailed upon Stedman to spend at least a few days with his mother at her home in Morristown. From there writing to a friend, the son says: "I am very glad to receive your letter, and it is lucky that you sent it *here*, as Fred. opens and replies to all my correspondence, and is under an agreement to forward none of it to this place. Possibly Reid told you that my head has 'gin eout,' right in the midst of the winter campaign, and that I have come up here to get well, if possible, under my mother's care—and am under orders neither to read, write, smoke, nor indulge in any other civilized vices. I shall, however, transgress sufficiently to answer your kind letter. The break-down is a bad one for me, as it not only has cost me losses in Wall Street but occurs when I am within *one month* of completing my prose-work, even now promised the printer. Am very anxious and helpless. Never before had any trouble with my head—except, you may suggest, lack of brains. My dear friend, the Stock Market by day and the desk by night have about killed me. Why were you and I born so poor!"

To Whitelaw Reid.

New York, February 16, 1875.

It is a good thing to have such a friend as you, and to be assured that when one is "out of sight" he isn't "out of mind." As I am hurrying to get away, and need all my strength on the last revision of my Ms. for the press, I will only write to thank you, and to say that you may be sure I shall "come up smiling" again, very shortly.

My trouble is purely the result of anxiety and overwork. Days when I don't read or write a line—now that I have closed up business—I find that all the *bodily* trouble begins to leave me—*Lusk has treated me splendidly*—understands my case, and is enabling me to finish up my work before leaving. Am going on a voyage to the Gulf, and shall take my wife for company. One week *on deck*, with no pen nor paper by me, and I shall be as well as you. Have found *just how far I can go*—and don't mean to strain the machine beyond that point.

The fact is that the best service my friends could do me would be to get me a good easy position, of trust and income, out of the Stock Board. I don't know whether its the stock-side of my head that's given way, or the book-side—but they don't trot together any longer. I make a living in Wall Street, but it is an incessant strain, and if I go back there next Fall, I shall run down again. Neither can I stand daily writing.

Good-bye. I have just borrowed $100 of Will Dodge, Jr., to make me perfectly easy—though I have some money on hand. He was so kind and anxious to do something that I had to let him have his way. With thanks for all your kind words and proffers.

My book will be tolerably complete this week, and I have an excellent man—R. U. Johnson—who knows my plans, to look after it. I was *so near* through that it was worth the effort to finish it, and get it off my mind. When one is ill, every mole-hill seems a mountain, *you* know.

From Whitelaw Reid.

New York, February 17, 1875.

I am delighted to find you writing so cheerily. Only one word by way of goodbye: *Don't hurry back.* Take all the time you can.

As to easy situations they are harder to find than before the panic, but I am sure you have friends who will do all they can to keep you out of Wall Street. Life there is too exciting for the bundle of nerves which you call your body—at least too exciting as you pursue it in the daytime with another day's work piled at the end of it in your library.

. . . Don't show your face in New York until you know that you are all right. I am sure as you are that it is nothing but rest you want, only—well you know I am an allopathist and believe in big doses.

Stedman was forced to give up his struggle; in order to go away for a complete rest, to rent his home—"shall come to hard pan," he says, "anything but debt." Ill as he was, before he would sail for the Carib Sea, he finished his manuscript of the "Victorian Poets." On the eve before his start, he is found answering some twenty important letters, "which I must and shall write before leaving." These letters show how his valiant spirit resented being forced to retreat from the battle-field. And, in a letter to T. B. Aldrich, how unselfishly he enjoyed a friend's realization of his own long cherished dream.

New York, February 26, 1875.

Your letter reaches me just as we are packing our trunks. *We* go to the Caribbees, leaving tomorrow—merely to get a few weeks on the ocean, out of reach of books, letters, and work. I have had quite an illness: a *head*-difficulty, brought on by various anxieties and lack of sleep, and probably need a rest. My uncle wished us all to go to Europe for a year, at his expense, but when I go *there* I wish to be like you—well, and free from thoughts as to the future. I am somewhat compensated by the knowledge that you and your wife are at last to see what we all have so long dreamed of. The *tradesmen* go and come, but fellows like us—

> "Prophets and kings desired it long
> And died without the sight."

I am especially glad that Joaquin Miller will not, hereafter, be the latest representative over there, of an American writer and poet. In short, *next to going ourselves*, (I won't be artificial enough to make my statement any stronger), I am delighted you are to have a good time.

Still, there are two periods in life when foreign travel is even more enjoyable than in one's prime. The first is gone by and can never return either to you or to me—the time when one, in *youth*, travels solely to see *things*—old cities, cathedrals, pictures, mountains; when their atmosphere intoxicates him, and the world is "all before him, where to choose." The second is in age, when the campaign has all been fought, and travel rests the aspiration of the soul. In active and somewhat famous middle life, like yours, you will see *persons*, quite as much as things. You cannot be yourself unnoticed and unseen. This is, however, as it should be, and as I wish it to be: for your own honor, my dear fellow, and for the pleasure of those who, like me, love you and believe in your true and beautiful gift. I know that both in Paris and London you have won respect for yourself and for our better American literature, and you will find it to be so when you get across the sea. Let us hear all about it. We shall return in May from our somewhat penitential pilgrimage. Have broken up our home and leased the flat, feeling poor and doubtful of the future. I believe you know our few friends abroad,—Huntington, Graham, Smalley. . . .

Am sorry we shall miss you in New York. Accept our affectionate good wishes for yourself and your wife, and always think kindly of your old friend,

E. C. S.

Have been reviewing, last, one hundred English "minor poets," and claiming they are not equal to our own! Which is *true!* I am rapidly picking up, now, and shouldn't go away if our tickets were not bought and all arrangements made.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CARIB SEA

1875

SATURDAY, February 27, 1875, at half past five in the afternoon, the steamer *Andes*, with three inches of snow on her deck, bound for Port au Prince, Aux Cayes, and Kingston, left her pier 51, New York, carrying among her seven passengers, Stedman and his wife. Although then he knew it not, by this voyage to the West Indies Stedman was to be granted the romance, color, and scenery, which his soul, longing for travel and adventure, while shackled with care and grief, had been denied. To those who journey, wide and often, on happy holidays, this short trip may seem of small import, but as everything is relative, to Stedman, who physically and mentally needed to be lifted out of the rut of his life's dull routine, this glimpse of a Nature, exotic and primitive, was filled with enchantment. Indeed, it was an epoch in his career. As once he wrote that great lover and word-painter of the Tropics—Lafcadio Hearn—the Windward Islands were ever his Hesperides.

The leisure for extended travel was never to be vouchsafed to him; and is it not admirable that whenever his sturdy conscience allowed him a brief hour of freedom he enjoyed it with his whole being, utilizing whatever good it might offer him? Viewing his poetry—his natural and favorite choice of expression—it is obvious that he was quick to interpret any scene, experience, emotion, which thrilled him. There was not one drop of didacticism in his slight, nervous organism; he abhorred "made to order" poems for occasions, unless the occasion spontaneously prompted the poem. His was not the meditative mind, fathoming its own depth to soar in lofty utterance; his flashing, acutely alive intellect, answered with the sudden and vivid luminosity of lightning to the spark that came. Also, he felt that whereas one might be an "artist," or a learned scholar, to be a real poet, one must in the end touch the heart of the world. He had a scant regard for the school of poets, who, mistaking their vaporous images for true poetic divination, decoy with vague, colorful similes. "They mistake the desire to beget, for the begetting power. Their mimes and puppets have everything but souls." As he used to warn others, so he warned himself—*first have something to tell.*

The respite on the Carib Sea in 1875, and, again, when its waters were revisited in 1892, gave him the themes for his cycle of poems, which he entitled by its name. It gave him the spirited ballads: "Morgan," "Captain Francisca," "Christophe," and "Panama," with its haunting—

"There's a heretic to singe to-day,—
Come out! Come out!"—still strive to say
The Bells of Panama.

It gave him the exquisite poems of Nature: "Kennst Du?" "Sargasso Weed," "Jamaica," and "Fern-Land," with such delicate tracery as—

Here, unseen by grosser light,
Fairy-land, at noon of night
Holidaying,
Sallies forth in fine arraying;
Elfin, sylphide, fay, and gnome
On the dew-tipped ferns disport,
In the festooned creepers swing,
Their light plumage fluttering.
Fern-Land is their ancient home,
Here the monarch holds his court,
Puck abideth;
Here the Queen her changeling hideth,
Ariel doth merrily sing.

. . . .

Would you had the fine, fine ear
The dragonfly's recall to hear,—
Tiny words
Of the vibrant hummingbirds
That, where bloom convolvuli,
Round the dew-cups whir and hover,
Thrusting each, hour after hour,
His keen bill to heart o' the flower,
As some mounted knight may ply
His long lance, an eager lover,
Through deep sedges,
And athrough the coppice edges,
Fain to reach his lady's bower.

. . . .

Step you soft, be mute and wary
Lest you wake the lords of Faery!
Motion rude
Fits not with their solitude:
Else the spider will resent
And the beetle nip you well,
Bête-rouge in your neck will furrow,
Garapata dig his burrow:—
Dread the wasp's swift punishment
And the chegoe's vengeance fell:
Well-defended,
Fairies sleep till day hath ended,—
Leave we Fern-Land and its spell.

It gave him also his legends of tropic life and tropical emotions: "Castle Island Light," "La Source," "Martinique Idyl," "The Rose and the Jasmine," "Creole Lover's Song"; and it inspired his "Astra Caeli," "To L. H. S.," and "Ariel," the latter in memory of Percy Bysshe Shelley. In a letter to Horace E. Scudder, after the second visit to the Caribbees, Stedman speaks of his "Ariel:"

Heaven has bounteously prolonged my life, "venerable man" that I am, and brought me back again so fit—as the Jamaicans say—that it seems dastardly to tell *you* of my health. For it is plain that the last year has been a bad climacteric for you. I really wish, if you are a fair sailor (and all men are, after the first few days), that you could and would take a long voyage—say to Gibraltar and back. The experiment has several times proved a complete alterative for me, and has set me up for years afterward. This time I have had a month of cloudless skies, sparkling waves, and tropical mountains. The rainy season down there was delayed this year: it seems you have had it all in the North.

As I write, I learn of the death of poor Osgood, who "*should* have died hereafter"; also that Henry Parker, and another old acquaintance, have made their exits.

Your letter is quite the pleasantest of my welcomers. Thank you for it, in all its detail,—the same being, in commercial phrase, carefully noted.

You are a seer. It *is* a Shelley poem. For years I have wished to write a poem on that poet's poet; but I only recently observed that this is his centennial year. For once, in a decade past, I have had the chance and the wish to give myself quite up to a flight in poetry. I wrote this on shipboard, under ideal conditions, and revised it among the Blue Mountains of Jamaica. It is poetry or nothing. If it is not an absolute repossession of my old vein, at its best, it is nothing. I don't know whether folk care for *poetry*. Perhaps if Keats were now to print the "Ode to a Nightingale," or Shelley "The Skylark," in the *Atlantic*, the newspapers would say "There are also verses by Mr. Shelley and Mr. Keats." But none can spoil the delight with which I wrote this poem!

A foot-note may be placed *as* a foot-note, or after the title, as you prefer. I usually dislike to divide the title and the poem.

Arthur and I certainly will closely read your Whitman paper. *I* am curious to get your view. There certainly is a true path somewhere between the extremes taken by Higginson and O'Connor. When I see you, I must give you a delicious story of the preparations made for the funeral, by Walt's inner circle, months before his death—and of their indignation over his unconscionable delay in furnishing "the remains."

You speak of the Caribs. They ate their parents, until the missionaries refused to let them commune unless they stopped *that* habit. Then—they exchanged parents, and each man ate his friend's father and mother.

I declined to "run" the Authors' League, so you see I am reforming. The task suits Colonel H. and I see that he has begun it, and he probably is the right man for the place.

I think that I may call my new collection of poems,[1] ere long, *Ariel; The Carib Sea; and other Poems Now First Collected.*

Not long after his return to New York, from his first voyage to the Tropics, Stedman contracted for a series of these poems to be published in the *Atlantic*, of which transaction, Professor James H. Morse remembers this anecdote: "One poem had passed successfully through the editorial sieve. The second had not been sufficiently 'pulverized,' according to the editor's judgment, and was sent back by Mr. Howells. 'I defended my work,' said the poet. 'I was greatly disappointed, and I told the editor so.' 'Send it again,' was the answer from the tripod. 'I think more of the opinion of the readers of the *Atlantic*. I will let them judge.' If I am not mistaken, the poem was that delightful, ambrosian song—'The Rose and the Jasmine.' " Twenty years later, Horace Howard Furness wrote Stedman: "I think I shall return most frequently to your 'Carib Sea.' 'Tis a new world to our Northern blood, and 'tis good to bathe in its glow. Your 'Creole Lover's Song' ought to celebrate its century, and its neighbor, 'The Rose and the Jasmine' is charming, charming. There is the drip of the jungle in that exquisite line: 'All light, and fragrance, and ethereal dew,' while in the line before it: 'With tremulous pulsation that it seems,' the *s*es give you the hiss of hidden snakes."

The year following the death of Stedman, in speaking of their relations as editor and contributor, when Howells was editor of the *Atlantic*, Mr. Howells said: "I was always asking Stedman for poems. I always liked to have him in the January number, which we made a special number; and he wrote some of his best poems for that January issue. In 1877, when I invented the idea of having a song with music each month, he wrote the first one—the *Creole Lover's Song*. The music was by Dudley Buck. I carried that feature through a year, but I saw it was not making any favor for the magazine, so I gave it up. No song was so successful as his." Of this poem, which grew out of his tropical experiences, Stedman in 1877, wrote to Howells:

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[1] "Poems Now First Collected," *1897*.

> But now about the songs. One day, in the midst of my work, I got a letter from Mr. Buck, which at once struck me as the letter of a true artist—a conscientious and poetic musician. He was good enough to say that he had selected my tropical song (which I thought you had concluded to use as a *poem*, only) from several others, as the one best suited for a strong effort on his part. He suggested some alterations, with so much perception and reason, that I was struck with his proposals and determined to assist him as I could. Among the rest, he wished me to introduce a verse suggesting danger, for a loud *agitato* effect before the verse beginning "Whisperer, tarry a space." This I at once wrote for him, the idea striking me as a fine one, and the new stanza *tones up* the whole poem. This making the song too long, I ruthlessly cut out the second stanza,—which always reminded me of one of Taylor's, anyhow.
>
> To-day Mr. Buck has been over here, with a superb baritone singer, and rehearsed his song for me—and he really has quite taken me captive. He has composed a magnificent *baritone* song (for contralto, also)—varying the music to suit each stanza: a song that will live, if printed, and be sung by every baritone in the country. It is rare, indeed, that a poet is so well understood and interpreted by a musician, and I was touched. Do have some vigorous singer render it for you:—the accompaniment, too, is perfection. You will observe little changes I've made in the words, here and there. I should say it certainly would occupy four pages in the magazine but Mr. Buck justly says that if you really want to call attention to your music you must now and then have a real "effort" and occupy some space.—Contralto and baritone songs are very scarce, you know. The *short* song he wrote you of is simply one of my long-printed ones, which he has set to music, and which of course you can't use. But I mean by and by to write a short one expressly for him and you—as we can work well together.

The prophecy concerning his "Creole Lover's Song" was, indeed, to come true. In after years, the poet often enjoyed hearing the exquisite music composed by Dudley Buck; and, especially, as it is rendered by that great baritone—David Bispham. In memory of the pleasure that this song, and another "Shadow-Land,"[1] had afforded the poet, they were sung by Mr. Bispham at the Commemorative Exercises for Mr. Stedman in 1909. The friendship with Dudley Buck, and the interpreting of several of his songs by that composer, was always a source of sincere gratification and satisfaction to Mr. Stedman.

Besides Mr. Buck's Opus 79, of five songs by Stedman: "Thou Art Mine!" "Shadow-Land," "I Love Thee!" "The Silent World Is Sleeping," "Creole Lover's Song"—he composed the music to the poet's "Falstaff Song," which was first published in the *Cosmopolitan* for May, 1892, and, in 1899, issued by Schirmer; its words and music dedicated to "The Players." "Strange it seems," says the poet, "when one first discovers it, that Shakespeare put no ballad, tavern-catch, or other song in the mouth of pewter-clinking Sir John. But he certainly left us a tempting refrain for one." The "tempting refrain" certainly afforded Stedman inspiration for such superb lines as

Where's he that died o' Wednesday?
  What place on earth hath he?
A tailor's yard beneath, I wot,
  Where worms approaching be;
For the wight that died o' Wednesday,
  Just laid the light below,
Is dead as the varlet turned to clay
  A score of years ago.

. . . .

Where's he that died o' yesterday?
  What better chance hath he
To clink the can and toss the pot
  When this night's junkets be?

---

[1] "The Undiscovered Country."

For the lad that died o' yesterday
  Is just as dead—ho! ho!—
As the whoreson knave men laid away
  A thousand years ago.

In turn, to Mr. Buck, the poet says: "I am simply wild over the music, which will float the words forever." Stedman's poems were admired and set to music for pleasure and for occasion by many composers; and in the course of his life he wrote poems specifically for music, from his early college rhymes to the *Yale Ode for Commencement Day*, 1895, which was set to music by Professor Horatio W. Parker; and to the *Hymn of the West*, with music by John Knowles Paine—the official hymn of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, 1904. Writing of his earlier "songs," in 1878, to Richard Grant White, the author says:

> Poets write for poets, I believe,—at least for their fellows of the lettered craft; and Browning well says
>
> "You have the fellow-craftsman's sympathy,
> There's none knows like a fellow of the craft
> The all unestimated sum of pains," etc.—
>
> So you know a thing when you see it, and your unexpected words of praise are more grateful to me than milk and honey. And so your note must have an immediate response, though a dozen lie unanswered upon my table—and are likely to. There let them *lay*, with Byron's Gladiator!—Yes: I "set up" for a song-writer; though this vulgar age and generation know and care little enough about song. They have an appetite for the good—and the same appetite for the bad. Is the food filling at the price? If so, it will do.—I think you have seen Korbay, the fashionable (and really brilliant) Hungarian composer's air and accompaniment to my "Song from a Drama." The music is scholarly, and full of fire, though too difficult for the Missys. Let me ask you to accept this little volume of miscellaneous pieces in which you'll find the words. I should add that several composers, professional and lay, have used the same words, and I believe Arthur Sullivan has borrowed them lately. Can I write, and have I written, more such?

Why, my dear Mr. White, if I had an *income* I'd be like the skylark "thou that singing still dost soar and soaring ever singest." You ought to have my collective edition of poems, 1873, and my "Victorian Poets" for I sent both to you—and didn't you take me down for writing the latter! On page 333 of the "Poems" are the "Stanzas for Music," my own pet song, with a *meaning*, which Higginson in a review said was my high-water mark, and to which the "I know not if twilight or starlight" is written as a companion-piece. Pray look at it. Also at the "Creole Lover's Song," a tropical thing, written in Jamaica, originally set to music by Dudley Buck for the *Atlantic*, and now published by Schirmer—Baritone *and* Soprano. *You* will like them both. The "Creole Lover's Song" has been successful at Concerts of late—good baritone songs, as you well know, being very scarce. Mr. Buck has just finished an *opus*, five songs by myself, including *his* music to the song you have seen, the Creole Song, and three others—one of which, a *Nocturne*, I have written expressly for him. The five will come out ere long. They were rehearsed at Hassard's lately—all very fine in melody *and* harmony, with nothing commonplace in them.—Now I am touched and *satisfied* with your approval of one of my Songs; for the world is too hurried, of late, to be nice as to such things. I am not an egotist: am too laden down with care and work to think of anything else, but I do think that I inherit from my mother a *natural ear;* and I perfectly agree with your view of what a song should be. Pray you, read my remarks on the same theme, "Victorian Poets," p. 101—*in re* Barry Cornwall.

The good composers seem to have found me out, and bother me for songs, of late: Buck, Korbay, Bassford, Payne, etc.

As the scenes of the Virginia Encampments in the War had made Stedman long for the brush of the painter, so, in the Tropics he repeats, "I wish I could draw or paint some of these places." A little note-book that he carried to the Carib Sea is filled with sketches: entries in that little book also show the inquiring and alert spirit which was habitually characteristic of him. No sooner had he come on board the *Andes* than he inspected the entire ship, learning its tonnage, capacity, and its size; then he ascertained the names, and interests, of the passengers, the crew, and the officers.

While never inquisitive, Stedman invariably concerned himself with the fate of others. No matter how unromantic in reality his present acquaintances might be, nor individually how unequal their significance in the judgment of the world, to him, they were, everyone, a vital part of this or that experience or drama: their characters and their histories of impelling and similar fascination; their enjoyment in the immediate instance, at least, of first importance. He felt responsible, as well as glad, to make their voyage pleasant. His remarkably vibrant nature, spurring him on irrepressibly, would never permit him to relax, to withdraw. He could not loaf on shipboard; he could not give his body a chance to recuperate—not so long as there was a living being or creature near him. The curtain of his drama was always up—the play was on; his part a leading one. And the choice of drama must be harmonious with the conditions and surroundings: hence, the voyage should truly be a holiday. What Stedman has written of his dear friend, Clarence King, might be said of himself: when on pleasure bent, he was "a veritable Prince Florizel with the tray of tarts offering lollipops right and left." When the *Andes* reached her first landing place, Stedman had a "grand picture" taken of every soul on board. Then he is found at the tropical markets buying fruits and presents for those on the ship, and for the friends left at the North. To be generous, to give, to make the day or hour beautiful, made him happy; and when his resources restricted such gracious acts, he was prone to be temporarily despondent. To some who have large sympathy, the gods can bring no misfortune more unkind than the inability to be bountiful to others.

Always a good sailor, delighted with any mood of his beloved Ocean, the rough seas which the *Andes* met were a stimulant to Stedman. Within twenty-four hours, he is "feeling better," and on his second night out "slept soundly for the first time in three months. Am picking up rapidly." To note the ship's course, her speed; to follow her chart; to look for the changing winds;—

And between the wave and sky
To watch all day the sea-fowl play,
While lone ships hasten by.

All such things charmed his observant mind; and, for his imagination, held infinite poetry. The fourth day out, he saw his first flying fish, and was entranced by "water exquisitely blue—a different color from the Northern seas." The weather now grew more beautiful with each new sunrise, and the balm of languid, soft breezes lured him to a delicious forgetfulness of the austerities of his native land. By March 5, they were off Crow Head Island, and entering the Passage, along a white beach and coral reefs, for

Between the outer Keys,
Where the drear Bahamas be,
Through a crooked pass the vessels sail
To reach the Carib Sea.

'T is the Windward Passage, long and dread,
From bleak San Salvador;
(Three thousand miles the wave must roll
Ere it wash the Afric shore).

On they drifted—

Wondering at the hue beneath you
Of the restless shining waves,
Asking of the palm and coral,—
Of the white cascades—the floral
Ridges waiting long to wreath you
With the blooms our Norseland craves.

. . . .

More and ever more, the while you
Sailed where every distance gleams,
Passed all sorrow, died all anger,
In the clime of love and languor,
Till we reached the mist-hung isle you
Called the haunted Isle of Dreams.

On past Bird Island, "where," the traveller notes, "the

British Government is putting up a Light-House." On to Castle Island Light—

Of all that bound the ocean round
  It has the loneliest site.

He has sung of its warder, "aged like Lear," with his daughters three,

Sun-flecked, yet fair, with their English hair,
  Nymphs of the wind and sea.

Following on: "Magnificent morning. Brisk sea running. Perfect liquid lazuli. Never saw anything like it,"

And the sky is a hollow pearl
  Curved over a sapphire sea.

March 6: "At 10 A. M. sighted the Cuban mountains on starboard side. Saw where Paul and Virginia tried to land. At noon Hayti on the port bow. This sea, between the Bahamas and the great Islands, is the most exhilarating and beautiful cruising ground conceivable. Wish the boys were here. Poor Fred. needs just such a trip. Fortune Island, north of Hayti—the home of the Buccaneers—about eighteen hundred of them." Of these dare-devil fellows, he has left chronicles; especially one,—a stirring evidence of the dramatic dash of his pen, and proving, as Henry M. Alden has said, "how native to him was the spirit of adventure." It will be recognized as

MORGAN

Oh, what a set of Vagabundos,
  Sons of Neptune, sons of Mars,
Raked from todos otros mundos,
  Lascars, Gascons, Portsmouth tars,
Prison mate and dock-yard fellow,
  Blades to Meg and Molly dear,
Off to capture Porto Bello
  Sailed with Morgan the Buccaneer!

. . . .

Lust and rapine, flame and slaughter,
Forayed with the Welshman grim:
"Take my pesos, spare my daughter!"
"Ha! ha!" roared the devil's limb,
"These shall jingle in our pouches,
She with us shall find good cheer."
"Lash the graybeard till he crouches!"
Shouted Morgan the Buccaneer.

Out again through reef and breaker,
While the Spaniard moaned his fate,
Back they voyaged to Jamaica,
Flush with doubloons, coins of eight,
Crosses wrung from Popish varlets,
Jewels torn from arm and ear,—
Jesu! how the Jews and harlots
Welcomed Morgan the Buccaneer!

March 7. In Bay of Hayti—exquisite morning. Heading for Port au Prince. Gonaïves on right. The entrance to the Bay and Strait very grand. The mountains on the mainland one mile high and distant. On the right Gonaïves a long high island—with smoke and fires—wooded thickly. Island and mainland narrowing together in a strait. A tropical bird,[1] yellow bellied, blue-winged, flew aboard at 10 A. M. Passed a low, curious reef called the Arcadians. At 3 P. M. having passed most beautiful scenery—cocoanuts, palms, bananas, mangoes, etc., came to anchor. Nigger pilot—went ashore—most astounding experiences—all colors—languages—dress. Picturesque forts with cocoa-trees and bananas. Sunday a holiday. Harbor full of sharks. Came aboard, not being able to get a lodging, owing to a great fire burning all hotels, etc.

March 9. On board all A. M. resting. Went to market and bought mangoes, pears, cocoanuts, etc. In P. M. went ashore and to the Embassy. Mr. Van Bokkelen had two horses ready—placing me on a lively and easy-going white horse, one of the handsome small breed in use here. The animal formerly belonged

[1] Stedman cared for this bird, and brought him to New York. The diary, June 13, 1876, reads: "Poor Mingo, our beautiful and sagacious troupial, killed by a rat. Ariel strangled by Caliban."

to General Cabral, and saved his life when the enemy had surprised him. We went up the mountain-road. . . . to *La Source*—the fountains that supply water to the capital. I was astonished and delighted at the wonderful richness and beauty of the path and vegetation on either side. Every tree seemed a fruit-tree, and all was the wildest tropical profusion. The outlook over the country was very fine, but I was so charmed with the woods that I paid little attention to the prospect. We passed an immense number of white palms, mangoes, almond trees, avocado pears, tamarinds, oranges, custard-apples, bananas, etc. Even the thatched huts of the negroes are picturesque. On each side the way I saw the decaying but still beautiful mansions of the early French proprietors, who must have been princes in their way. At the fountain about twenty-five negro women and girls were washing their clothes, most of them nearly naked. Some of the young girls had exquisite figures—one, the most beautiful and natural form I ever saw. *The place for a sculptor.*

Straight as the aloe's crested shoot
That blooms a golden month and dies,
She stayed an instant, with one foot
On tiptoe, poising statue-wise,
And stared, and mocked us with her eyes,
While rippling to her hip's firm swell
The mestee hair, that so outvies
Europe's soft mesh, and holds right well
The Afric sheen, in one dark torrent fell.

At 6 P. M. am home from a most enjoyable and memorable ride—the pleasure of which was to be marred by a vexatious mishap. As we descended from our horses in the courtyard—it being dark—a cowardly yellow cur bit me through the calf of my leg—breaking the skin. We thought at first it was not broken; so I only washed the place with my own saliva. On reaching the ship the skin proved to be *torn*, as well as black and blue. Cauterized it, but forgot to wash it first. They say there is no hydrophobia here, but remembering poor Ada Clare, etc., I really am not comfortable. Would give up my trip not to have received this scratch. Passed a restless night.

March 10. Ashore at 11 to be introduced to His Excellency, General Domingue, President of Hayti. Found the "Palace" surrounded by guards and a soldier at every crook and turn of the stairs, etc. Old Domingue is a pure black, seventy years old, or more—rather feeble but with much dignity. Looks wise, kind and gentle, though he has shot whole batches of malcontents, etc. He sat in a chair at an end of the room—in undress uniform. Reminded me of "Old Zach." Taylor. After some talk and interchange of compliments, etc., national, and otherwise, vermuth was brought in and the President touched glasses with us and drank our healths in a beautifully turned speech. Then we called on the following Ministers of the Cabinet: Septimus Ramon—President of the Council, and Vice-President of Hayti—a fine black of great courage and shrewdness. Likely to succeed Domingue, and to make a great ruler, possibly to declare himself emperor. His brother, Octavius, with him—these are of the famous Ramon family,—men of parts, activity and genius; Madison, Minister of Finance and State. At each place, 'tafia' and port was brought in, and healths exchanged. Captain Cutts surprised me by kissing Madame —— (a mulatto) on both cheeks. Said she was an old friend. Saw pictures here and there—Washington, etc. Consulted a French Doctor about my leg. He looked also at the dog. Says the latter is not mad, and there's no danger. The Doctors always say this, and I am not wholly reassured, and shall not be till weeks have passed. Returned to dinner. We are living finely on board—on fried plantains, pears, mangoes, oranges, etc. Wish the boys were here. A fine shower in the evening and cool sea-breeze. Turned in at 9 P. M.

March 11. Had a good night's rest at last. A delicious breakfast. Am better again, and should feel well, except for worry about my leg. *A mean thing* to have hanging over one. Captain angry about cargo and delay in getting off. To bed early. Delightful sea-breeze.

March 12. My leg inflamed, owing, I suppose, to the cautery. Went on shore to look at the miserable cur. He is chained this A. M., owing to his viciousness, *they say*—but I *can't* feel easy about the affair, do what I may. They promise not to kill him, but to write me of his condition. Didn't suppose I ever should feel so anxious to have a vicious, sneaking mongrel thrive and prosper! Aboard at noon, and off at 1 P. M. for Aux Cayes. Have about twenty well-bred French mulattoes on board. I tell our blockade running Captain, who is greatly disgusted with his mahogany-hued passengers, that it is a just retribution on him for his piracy and slave-owning. All fun, of course—fairly given and taken. Last night the Haytian government voted a loan of $12,000,000!! An enormous steal, I think, in prospect of old Domingue's speedy demise. Shall hereafter watch this curious republic (!) with some interest. In the evening all the quadroons fetch their matresses on deck and lie in a picturesque group. Sea is rough again. Moon bright.

Night wind, whispering wind,
Wind of the Carib sea!
The palms and the still lagoon
Long for thy coming soon;
But first my lady find:
Hasten, nor look behind!
To-night Love's herald be.

The feathery bamboo moves,
The dewy plantains weep;
From the jasmine thickets bear
The scents that are swooning there,
And steal from the orange groves
The breath of a thousand loves
To waft her ere she sleep.

. . . .

Speed thee, wind of the deep,
For the cyclone comes in wrath!
The distant forests moan;
Thou hast but an hour thine own,—
An hour thy tryst to keep,
Ere the hounds of tempest leap
And follow upon thy path.

. . . .

Spirit of air and fire,
To-night my herald be!
Tell her I love her well,
And all that I bid thee, tell,
And fold her ever the nigher
With the strength of my soul's desire,
Wind of the Carib sea!

March 13. Off the west cape of Hayti, and entering the Caribbean sea. Wind S. E. again—the same old head wind. Splendid sky, sea and mountainous headlands. Sea all blue and gold and long billows rolling from the Spanish main.

Do you know the blue of the Carib Sea
Far out where there's nothing but sky to bound
The gaze to windward, the glance to lee,—
More deep than the bluest spaces be
Betwixt white clouds in heaven's round?
Have you seen the liquid lazuli spread
From edge to edge, so wondrous blue
That your footfall's trust it might almost woo,
Were it smooth and low for one to tread?
So clear and warm, so bright, so dark,
That he who looks on it can but mark
'T is a different tide from the far-away
Perpetual waters, old and gray,
And can but wonder if Mother Earth
Has given a younger ocean birth.

The run East down the South coast of Hayti is like a glorious dream. The shore is some five miles away; a stiff sea running, and breaking in surf visible from the quarter-deck. Above a narrow line of white beach rises a range of lofty mountains, full of lights and shadows, covered with a most beautiful verdure and forest. The top of the range, for a hundred miles of length is lost in clouds. Here, four centuries ago, dwelt a happy, peaceful, gentle Aboriginal people—over 2,000,000, not one of whom remains, or has left a trace behind. Such is the humane result of Church propagandism—the result of Christian civilization. Now, a mongrel, steadily decreasing population of 800,000. (Trade in Hayti is a conspiracy beween foreign merchants and the governments to swindle the common people.) Our passengers of distinction, General Legér of the Haytian army, General Fabre, also of the Haytian army. In the evening a very heavy swell running, could not get into the Aux Cayes Harbor. Had to lay off and on until morning. All the yellow folks sending up the wails of the damned with every roll of the ground-swell.

March 14. Came to anchor in harbor of Aux Cayes at 9 A. M.

Large yellow sharks at once hovering around the ship. The beasts! A very picturesque place—flanked with cocoa-groves. Fine mountain behind, covered with clouds. Low reefs and shoals all around the bay.

> And between your ship and the shore and sky
> The frigate-birds like fates appear,
> The flapping pelican feeds about,
> The tufted cardinals sing and fly.
> So fair the shore, one has no fear;
> And the sailors, gathered forward, shout
> With strange glad voices each to each,—
> Though well the harbor's depth they know
> And the craven shark that lurks below,—
> "Ho! let us over, and strike out
> Until we stand upon the beach,
> Until that wonderland we reach!"
> —So green, so fair, the island lies,
> As if 't were adrift from Paradise.

March 15. Great swell rolling. Ashore with Captain in P. M. Introduced to Thomas Dutton, H. B. M. Vice-Consul at Aux Cayes and his partners: Mr. Winkelman, etc. Wandered over town. Very picturesque.

March 16. Fine rain last night. Cool to-day. Ashore, met Mr. Charles ———, publisher *Daily Chronicle*, of Halifax. All went to see General Legér. At 12 M. Laura and I have *dejeuner à la fourchette*—seven courses—very good—at Mr. Dutton's. Walked with Laura to see cocoa-grove, naked women washing, etc. At 3 P. M. General Legér takes us all in his boat up the beautiful little river to his country plantation. A most picturesque and enjoyable sail and thoroughly tropical refreshments—cocoanut milk and tafia, mineral waters, mangoes, etc. He fills our boat with oranges, cocoas, cane, etc., for the ship. Saw all his little boys and nephews bathing, etc. His plantation runs for a mile between the river and a beautiful sea-beach. At 6 P. M. returned to ship and bade the General goodbye with a glass of wine, etc. Bought bandannas, etc., for presents North.

March 19. Entered harbor of Jacmel and came to anchor about a furlong's length from shore. Beautiful bay. Forts on left and right; surf breaking; highest mountains in Hayti close by. Bad harborage. The town is the most picturesque we have yet seen—rising tier on tier, with a general look like a Moorish city. The church, convent, *place d'armes*, etc., all in sight. Houses yellow, red, etc. Very pleasing. Trade and population about the same as at Aux Cayes. The whole country volcanic. Went ashore and visited market, church, etc. Yesterday sixteen cannibals were escorted from here over the mountains to Port au Prince, by order of Domingue to be executed, *they say* (?).

Writing to his doctor-friend William T. Lusk, Stedman says: "Hayti is the most astonishing place in the world. Rich, fertile, amazingly beautiful, and inhabited by a grotesque black race (all shades) who imitate all the grandeur, folly, vice, fashion, of the outside world. What letters I *could* write! Am surprised that Taylor and other travellers, and the artists, all go to Egypt instead of coming here! You should have seen me drinking vermouth and 'tafia' and talking diplomacy, with the Haytian President and Cabinet! Great larks!"

At five o'clock on the afternoon of March 20, the *Andes* weighed anchor for Kingston. Over a moonlit sea, the ship steered toward Jamaica, of which the poet says:

I know an island which the sun
Stays in his course to shine upon,
As if it were for this green isle
Alone he kept his fondest smile.
Long his rays delaying flood
Its remotest solitude,
Mountain, dell, and palmy wood,
And the coral sands around
That hear the blue sea's chiming sound.

. . . .

Or from ocean to descry
Green plantations sloping nigh,
Starry peaks, of beryl hewn,
Whose strong footholds hidden lie
Furlong deep beneath the sea!

Long the mariners wistfully
Landward gaze, and say aright,
"Under sun or under moon
Earth has no more beauteous sight!"

March 23. [At Kingston.] Mails received per Steamer. Answered and mailed all letters. . . . Stocks all up in New York. A sad thing that I went away. Moral: again, never take the advice of even the most considerate friends, who do not fully know your affairs. Am disappointed about finding a place to settle down. It all looks doubtful, and, worse, I am as sick as ever.

March 29. No home yet, and growing worse daily. Must take quinine. Bought photographic views. A regular conspiracy to keep us from finding a country-place. Mr. Tracy Robinson, who succeeded my brother at Aspinwall, calls. A fine fellow, interested in tramways here.

April 2. Have been in this accursed thieving town four days longer. It has cost us about $10. a day extra for carriages, etc., trying to find a country place. Yesterday rode with Robinson to Stony Hill, and at last secured a place at Mrs. Magnus'—a roadside cottage, half-hut, romantically situated amid tropical foliage, etc., 1400 feet above the sea. To-day we start, bled of money to the last moment. But I hope now to grow better in health, and get some compensation for my terrible losses of time and money, and of the turn in the stock market. Shall go back to New York, nearly forty-two years old, and with all my fortune *yet to make.*

These last notes in Stedman's diary mark a pleasant happening of his visit to Jamaica, thenceforth giving him a vital link with the Tropics. Mr. Tracy Robinson, a poet and "man of sentiment," whom he then met for the first time, was with his wife to become life-long friends. This friendship led Stedman into a business negotiation which brought him on a sudden trip to Panama in December of this same year, affording him a brief glimpse again of the sparkling, cloudless Caribbean Sea. Recalling their first meeting, Mr. Robinson says:

I find frequent entries relating to the dearest friend I have ever had: On March 31, 1875, at Kingston, Jamaica, my diary reads:

"Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Stedman spent the evening at our house. Had a very pleasant evening. It seemed like life indeed to meet and talk with such people as the Stedmans." I remember they were disappointed about securing pleasant accommodations and that they talked of going right away back home, but next day, April 1, is the following note:—"Went by invitation of Mr. Stedman to Stony Hill, about eight miles from Kingston, to look at lodgings for them at Mrs. Magnus'. Lovely drive out and back which I enjoyed in a *high* way."

Mrs. Magnus was a brown woman who kept a rambling sort of ranch, with cottages all embowered in tropical foliage, very secluded, and quiet, where lizards "pouted" and ran up and down in the sun and broad-leaved banana trees were like pea-green umbrellas; among these was one cottage quite fresh and new, just the thing for them. It was open and airy and clean and above all the silence was primeval! Nothing could have been more delightful; and Mr. and Mrs. Stedman were like two big children in their enjoyment of it. We went frequently to see them, and when they felt like it they came down the beautiful road to town to see us. But the crowning glory came on April 16, 1875, when *this* entry occurs:—

"Today I have received from Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman the present of his poems, accompanied by a delightful letter in reply to one I wrote him. Am elated!" (I should say so!!). An extract from "The Mountain," copied by him on the fly-leaf, reads:

As on the mountain-top, alone,
The poet dwells, and holds a throne.
Princes or peasants, them we count
Our peers, who stand upon a mount,
See farther than the tribes below,
And know the joys they cannot know;
And, though beyond the sound of speech
They reign, my soul goes out to reach,
Far on their noble heights elsewhere,
My brother-monarchs of the air.

The book is now all gone to pieces from the effects of this climate, but I value it "more than gold." Not long afterwards we went North, and on July 25, 1875, I find this entry in my diary:—"At Coney Island with E. C. Stedman and his son Fred. Interesting day." A month before, on June 25:—"Went by invitation of E. C. Stedman to the Century Club, also to residence of R. H. Stoddard. Met the latter and his wife. Returned to the Club and remained until 10 P. M."

These were the earliest days of my most happy friendship with Stedman, followed later by constant evidences of the great kindness and cordiality with which he regarded his Isthmian friend *to the very last.*

Writing to Stephen H. Thayer about this beloved friend, Mr. Robinson says: "It was always charming, *delightful*, to be with him, either in his own home, or as his guest at the Century, the Players, or elsewhere; and, looking back in the light of lost days, I feel when remembrance brings him to me as though something good had happened, something cheerful and bright and happy."

This is the letter by Mr. Stedman to which Mr. Robinson refers: it illustrates the warm courtesy with which Mr. Stedman met a new-found friend; and his customary desire to return any kindness as generously as lay within his power. To anyone who was kind to him, Stedman became his life-long debtor, never failing nor tiring of any opportunity to repay the original act of friendship.

I don't know when I have been more surprised than by my good fortune in finding, at this distance from home, so valuable and *long-established* a friend and acquaintance as yourself; and I certainly have never been more touched and impressed than by your generous and spontaneous expressions of affection. You shall not leave without my written assurance that these are appreciated at their worth and fully reciprocated. Henceforth our intimacy will not be, as too long heretofore, *on one side.* You may be sure that, whatever distance may separate us, and however long the intervals of silence between us, you shall be held in affectionate remembrance—a remembrance in which your wife who was born with the gift of sympathy and the art of pleasing, will have an equal part. And I trust that hereafter you two will not be willing to pass through any place that may be our home without at once finding us out, and permitting us to renew the intercourse which for us has now so charmingly begun.

Meantime, the presence of your book, for which I am most sincerely obliged, shall stand in lieu of yourself—and often recall your cheering words and courtesies. I am very glad that you have copied for me your really exquisite "Song of the Palm" with your own hand. And if you have any more such idyls in your nature, pray give them *utterance*, for such are poems which no author would not be glad to compose.

It is much to have poets for one's readers, and with such appreciation as yours I am willing to believe in the consolatory statement of "E. L." (in the *Tribune*) that what audience I have, however limited, is "of the best."

Let me ask you to accept my own volume, merely as a *gage d'amour*. I know you have a copy, but that you can give to whom you choose, and retain this one for the sake of the donor. . . .

On the 9th of April, Stedman writes: "Have received a New York paper of March 26. The rise [in stocks] is immense, and I feel utterly ruined by once more missing one of the few *great* chances in life. Then on April 17, "Have been here eight days longer. The climate here certainly does not suit an anæmic or hyperanæmic person. In despair part of the time at not improving, but am now growing a little better. We find the cold days best, and so shall return to New York by the *Claribel*. I may get *some* money out of the month of May, and certainly can be no worse than here."

Intimate contact with the realities of tropic life had brought its disenchantment. Somewhat earlier than he had expected, but responding to a challenge from his "brave clime" recalling him to sterner duties, and pleasures, and, perhaps, in his restless activity, a trifle wearied

of the sky's eternal balm,
The ceaseless droop and rustle of the palm,

—on April 24, 1875, Stedman and his wife set return sail on the *Claribel* for the port of New York:—

Over the Carib Sea to-night
The stars hang low and near
From the inexplicable dome,—
Nearer, more close to sight,
Than from the skies which bound the stern gray sea
That girts our northern home.

. . . .

Ay,—but the trackless spirit
Comes not, nor is their utterance or sign
Of all we would divine
Vouchsafed from the unanswering dome:
No presence east or west,—
Only the stars—the restless wondering sea
Bearing us back, from foam-tipped crest to crest,
Toward the one small part ourselves inherit
Of this lone darkling world—and call our home.

CHAPTER XIX

IN WALL STREET

1875–1900

A FEW years before his death, Richard Watson Gilder wrote to Mr. Stedman: "Away back in the days of Seymour and Armstrong I remember that I loaned you a little money —and I want to tell you what they wouldn't let me tell you at the time that those people stood behind me; i. e. they told me they didn't want to make a precedent of lending money to authors—but that I might do it—and they would guarantee it. I fear you thought too well of me—and too harshly of them—and I see no reason why I shouldn't tell you about it now—not that I wouldn't have done it, gladly, without any word from them—but my recollection is that they came to me—and *wanted me to do it!* So—I hope you got my letter. I think so much, my dear fellow, of your faithful friendship."

Stedman's answer reads:

> Can it be that it was in 1875, twenty-nine years ago, when I was in a tight box of a sudden, and you helped me out, that I felt so old and with so little time for more work? I have overhauled my old diary (the little year-books in which I keep records, merely, of residence, journeys, letters, etc.) and find these entries on June 25, and July 1, 1875. (But no. I will enclose them, as they will interest you, and *please be sure to return them to me*, and I will restore them to the diary, with a P. S. dated 1904!) This was the occasion to which you refer? What a conscience is yours, to set the matter right after half a lifetime! But Laura said: "Is it possible you still owe the money?" So I went to my private cash-book of 1875, and found that there were entries to match. I enclose these also. It seems that I got badly hit by a failure in my very small tradings, and had to borrow from several friends. When I

finally went to my Uncle for $1,000., I paid the small loans instantly, before they were due. The next year I borrowed $10,000. in a lump, and started business again; had a fearful time until 1879, and then made $200,000 in three years—before my debacle of 1883! Your little $100. enabled me to meet a "difference" which, petty as it was, would have suspended me from the Exchange. It was almost my only period of enforced borrowing.

This "enforced borrowing" was a "bitter humiliation." At that time he writes: "My credit is sound, but what a false position I am in, and what a cruel blow! This is indeed bruising a wounded reed." It greatly distressed and mortified him to receive kind proffers of money from friends. His struggle before he finally sought help in 1876 is manifest:

. . . Dr. Lusk seems to have a clearer idea of my case, and that under a quinine treatment I sleep better, and am somewhat stronger. Should be quite hopeful, if it were not that the moment I have the least excitement, or *anxiety*, my head seems to *swell* and my side instantly becomes almost helpless. To-day, walking in the street, I happened to think all at once of my doubtful future and my perplexities, and *in a moment* my leg was in pain and half-paralyzed. It all comes from the *head*, and that is worn by years of *uncertainty* with respect to my income. When I have done the best, I have never known what might happen in a few months—and have always been willing to forego the chances of fortune for a regular, honorable, salaried position, anywhere near adequate to my needs.

Now you are all wrong in your letter received to-night. I am *perfectly willing* to receive *radical* help from my kind friends; but no help can be of any *ultimate* use that will not release me from *living by my wits*. When well, by the use of constant good judgment, caution, work, and great anxiety, I *have* been able to make a handsome income out of a very small capital; but my "wits" are worn out—the machine has broken down—and I feel that, if I go away and get strong, *one month in Wall Street on my return would reduce me to my present condition*. Now my cousins want to support me and my family till I get well. What then? Do it over again after a month's time? I have been sick for a good while, now, and have made losses besides, in order to close up my business. Now if I am only going away to come back to the same state of things, I prefer to rub through the best way I can. My relatives do not consider me fit to be trusted with a responsible position. Other people, I think, do, and if I live till business revives perhaps I can find friends who, instead of paying my expenses will give me some assurance that I can pay them myself.

Private: If you think I am cross-grained, obstinate, or selfish, you are mistaken. I have closed up everything to get out of Wall Street and have just $1,000. in cash. I don't want $5,000. to *go to Europe* for a year. I am finishing my book, with an assistant. We shall move *somewhere* March 1. If I had $1,000. more, I should run the risk of a trip of six weeks to Jamaica, etc., with Laura, and rest pretty much through the Summer on my return. But how useless for me to take money for my support for a year, and then *still* be a pauper! The fact is, it is *easier* for my friends to do a handsome thing by sending me abroad, etc., than to really make an effort, get a nice office for me, at $5,000. a year, and enable me to retain my seat in the Board for the $15,000. life insurance. I'd go away in a fortnight, and stay away from business all Summer, if I knew what to do in the Fall. If I have got to remain a speculator, I might as well go under now as then. My work and health have been retarded by all this pressure, and you might as well understand *where* the shoe pinches. I want genuine, *permanent* help, or else no more *obligations*.

Seven years before, he had written: "We are down to what the miners call 'hard-pan.' Well, I have been there before. It is a known and familiar region yclept *Bohemia*. The fact is that the tendency of the stock-business is to starve out all the small brokers and concentrate orders in the hands of the large houses. We had but a little capital and have worked honestly and hard, and for the last two months the percentage of risk and failure from the weak customers we are compelled to take or starve has been so much against us that we are almost beggars. . . . My heart is almost broken. . . . This eternal struggle will kill me yet, and *then* all my influential friends may do something, or wish they had. If I could only get a salaried position! You know this has been my talk for years. Why should I keep borrowing money to lose it? One loss is enough. So sensitive am I about this, that, the other day, I sent my Aunt Mary Stedman all the funds she had on deposit with us, for fear some accident might render me unable to do so ere long."

February 26, 1876. Had to borrow money to pay board, etc., to-day! As I lie awake, and sick, I reflect on the irony of life. For the first time, I have the ear of the critical public, here and abroad. Were I to write a long poem *now*, it would be looked for, carefully judged, etc. It would be either a great success, and insure a permanent literary future, or a great failure. It is in short, my opportunity, and here I am absolutely disqualified, by sickness, and poverty, from doing anything but stock-jobbing—from writing even a lyric! It is hard indeed.

March 1, 1876. Sick at heart. The constant *genius* required, and which I *seemed to possess for years*, to do a stock business on from $1,000. to $5,000., has deserted me—and I can no longer survive the struggle.

In March, 1876, he borrowed $10,000., at 7%, of his "good Uncle and Cousin—the Dodges," and opened in a "safe and quiet way" a regular Stock Commission office at No. 80 Broadway. "Beginning all over again, after eleven years struggling." The flat in Fifty-sixth Street was leased, Mr. Stedman removing his family to No. 49 East Ninth Street, taking Bohemian meals at the St. Denis. Sick or well, he worked honestly every day to put himself in a less dependent position. "I am thankful this is the *last* day of my acting as both cashier and speculator. 'A man can't be in two places at once, barrin' he's a bird,' said Boyle Roche. Last night, utterly tired and with clothes on, I lay upon the sofa, and slept till 3 A. M. *It did me a heap of good.*"

It is indicative of his kind heart, and his delight in doing for others, to find him writing to a less fortunate friend, "Perhaps I can make some money for you."

In six months he was able to refund $2,000., and, expenses paid, to have as much more left. While this made him rejoice, his inner voice whispered that he was wasting his strength and life, and with a wrench from his chains, he "thought out in sleep my thesis on Feeling and Art. Got up and wrote it, 2 A. M." Fourteen years later, he says: "You can readily conceive that, still being in a perplexed and inefficient way the relic of a 'Wall Street man,' I found myself, instanter, breasting a sea of troubles upon my return to town. For five weeks I have exchanged the Idyl of Kelp Rock for the Iliads of the Stock Exchange—going home each night, battered and foot-sore and heart-weary, to get what rest the evenings of steady lecture-writing could afford me. Think of writing on Beauty at night after being made booty of all day."

As an example of his grip on Stock matters take this letter to Whitelaw Reid:

New York, July 11, 1876.

We are staying at Bergen Point, and in this terrible weather I find it very difficult to meet up-town friends, so I'll write you a brief letter. Strictly on business; as you probably wish to hear something of the market. You observed, of course, that Telegraph and Pacific Mail never fell to our figures—i. e. to 1½ per cent profit on the former, or to any price at all approaching the sales of Pacific Mail.—On Wednesday, June 28th, Jay Gould, after telling all his speculative friends, (the night before) that they could safely sell Telegraph, and Pacific Mail, and Lake Shore, for a large decline, bought at a spurt *60,000* shares of Telegraph, and large amounts of Lake Shore, etc. The stock (Telegraph) rose 3 per cent. that morning, amid great excitement. It is thought he was influenced to this course by Sam. Mills, who had just returned, and who looked over his affairs, and told him he must close up his accounts and could only do it by a sudden dash. Besides, Gould learned on Tuesday night, it is said, of a combination against him. Fortunately, *Pacific Mail* had no *great* rise. It went up to 27, and off again, many times, keeping me in a state of mind as to your welfare. You being so sadly occupied, I watched the market carefully, to protect you against loss, and several times bought Pacific Mail, against a further rise, selling it out at about the same price when the danger slackened. Meantime, we have allowed the 1½ dividend on the 100 Telegraph, and now an injunction is placed on it—which may or may not be permanent—probably *not.* Pacific Mail to-night is 25¾. Telegraph about 70 + dividend, after being up to 72 + dividend. I am still short the 300 Pacific Mail, and 100 Telegraph, for you, having of course simply backed up the sale. My only doubt has been, in your absence, what you would wish me to do. If anything occurs to you, let me know.

I think, myself, that Gould has not done much more than cover up his "shorts"—coming out on an average about *even* in his Telegraph, and paying a handsome profit to his opponents, who bought the *low* stock he sold (64) and sold it back to him at 70. The market is now "dull" again, and little legitimate business doing. Everybody soreheaded over the recent turn, and in doubt what to do. The way I paid out money on June 28 and 29, for all my "bear" customers, who were short on *information*, was a caution!

And to Mr. H. —— of his integrity:

I have very carefully read your letter of the 12th October [1876]. How it reached here yesterday—in one day—is beyond my comprehension. I am more than glad to know that you are still active and courageous, and you have my best wishes for success. It is just as well for you to understand that you can have nothing more from me, whether you consider me under obligations or not, *because I have nothing more to give.* When we were both younger and more prosperous, either of us was willing to do all he could for the other. You loaned me $10,000. which I soon returned to you, for I always was sensitive about other people's money, and was afraid I should lose it. I did a good deal of confidential business for you, to the best of my ability, and you treated me always with the warmest friendship and most generous hospitality and gave my wife a superb present. Shortly afterwards, *directly and indirectly*, I lost, through you, all the ready money I had in the world, and had to sell my home, and give up my best-loved pursuits. Since then my life has been a struggle against odds—something like your own. This you have not chosen to believe. It culminated in a brain-fever two years ago. After two years of borrowing and enforced idleness, I last Spring raised some money from the Dodges for a last effort, and am now toiling along, trying to repay it and other loans made in my long sickness. *Not one cent* do I lend to friend or foe, brother or stranger, large or small, till I find my debts of honor paid.

In another vein, on a bit of memorandum paper, in the whirr of orders and the click of the ticker, he writes to Bayard Taylor:

> Dear old Bayard: I was very much vexed that I had to attend the 1 o'clock "call" yesterday: it chanced that I could not prevent it, and I was horribly overcome by the heat, and unfit company for anyone. Do come down again, at 12.15 or 12.30, and we can lunch together. There are several things I want to talk about. But until I have a partner, I can't sit down for *any length of time*, during business hours. Am not exactly my own master.
>
> Why don't your personal column give us a few poetical facts concerning Stoddard's household, or Aldrich's twins, or Taylor's cheesepress at Kennett, or Whittier's corns? These poets have not been advertised much of late—it isn't fair that Whitman should have *all* the attention. I see you call him the "old man"—if so, what is Gus. MacDonough?

He preferred not to be visited in Wall Street, where he was unable to give the friend entire attention. These stolen moments sometimes made him lose a turn in the market. To one such caller he says: "I see that you dined with Longfellow at Nahant. You went to his house—and not to his desk in the Professor's recitation room at Harvard. *Item:* never call on a poet in Wall Street if he has a home and welcome for you in Twenty-sixth Street."

Further: "I will talk stocks in my office, or discuss literature whem I am at home, but to bring books here, or carry stock there—I will not." Nevertheless the fragrance of poetry sometimes crept into his business life: In his telegraphic key we find that "Cancel order to buy" is *Keats;* "Select and sell at discretion"—*Shelley;* and so on for thirty-two items, the names of as many unforgotten favorites. And in his office letters, short and business-like, appears often an allusion to literature. "The Bard of the Exchange" his fellows called him, which friendly appellation he appreciated, and which he proved with his "Pan in Wall Street," and "Israel Freyer's Bid for Gold." But he did not relish the name of the "broker-poet," his own comment being:

> Thanks for your note *in re* Aerial Navigation, but *don't* call me "broker and poet." If you will allow me to compare small things with great, as Milton says,—you wouldn't say of Longfellow "Instructor in modern languages and Poet," or of Keats—"Apothecary and Poet," or of Burns "Granger and Poet." Confound it, a man must live somehow, and unless he writes newspapers or novels he can't live by literature. You know how it is, probably, yourself. Let me gamble as much as I choose, so long as I don't mix stock-quotations with my verse. Selah.
>
> Besides, New York hasn't many poets. Those she has may be poor ones, but you must nurse and cuddle us—and then we may improve. That system works well down East!

Again:

> Yesterday I forgot to recall to you that answer given by one of our humorists, when asked if he thought Bacon wrote Shakespeare's Plays—or, rather, who it was that wrote them? He gave his opinion that "it was not Shakespeare, but *another man by the same name*." Under the same ruling a broker *is* a banker—i. e. *the same man*, *by another name*. So *I* have to pay a special tax as a "banker—though in fact and technically a stock-broker, and putting on no frills that I can avoid.

His loyalty to his business life was supreme: Replying to a certain editor, he says, "But I am rather surprised at your request that I should write upon the sins of Wall Street. I know of no place where a more rigid sense of equity prevails among business men. And 'it is an ill bird that fouls its own nest.' "

Moreover:

> You are perfectly right in your view of the personal endurance and even heroism of the folk down here. When you mention Mr. Keene, you have a genuine illustration—equal to Wallenstein or Van Artwalde. But for the ordinary office speculator it is merely

> a question of margin—his broker knows his exact means—he can do nothing *but* to sweat, as a victim with the flames approaching him. No matter how much he controls his feelings, he can *do* nothing more *in consequence*.
>
> The real heroes are the great operators who make the market and are unmade by it—who direct the battle—and above all, the 600 traders and brokers on *the floor* of the Exchange. These men, in the direst panics, *must* be Spartans, and hide the foxes tearing their vitals: they must smile and talk composedly, even jest, while doom is on them, or their credit is gone at once. They are husbands, sons, brothers, and do not "turn a hair" while dying by piecemeal. Don't I know it all? *We* burn our own smoke!

That Stedman did not "turn a hair" is shown: "We have the cholera, badly, in the stock market this P. M., and I am a small loser—I reckon. However, I laugh when I lose, and when I win, I laugh a little more, like Beecher's gambler. Gambling and authorship are the only pursuits which a real gentleman condescends to."

His letter books bear evidence of his kind, advisory, and explanatory letters to his clients. Their interests were first with him, and to increase their incomes his unfailing thought. He invariably advised his women clients to invest only in thoroughly trustworthy stocks, and he made himself responsible for their losses, often meeting a deficit from his own pocket. Taking another view point his opinion on the office of a broker is this:

> You say, "I leave the decision to you, for a broker should be *trusted*, or not dealt with." For one, I do not wish any discretionary orders. A customer should know his own mind, and have his own opinion, or not deal. Have only acted for you "on discretion" to oblige a friend of Mr. Blood. It is not the custom to expect a broker to judge of the market. *If he could always do so, he would not need any customers, but would prefer to deal exclusively for himself.*

The trusts placed with Stedman were constantly in mind; when he would permit himself to accept an invitation out of town, he was prone to answer "subject to a telegraphic revoke in case my dangerous stock affairs should make it ruinous for my clients or for me to leave town."

Vitally interested in any subject to which he gave his attention, he acquainted himself with all matters in which Wall Street was involved; watched the financial articles of the best metropolitan journals, and wrote editors critically, or in praise, according as their reviews coincided with his own opinions and experience. Occasionally he wrote a money article himself.

During his life in Wall Street he received many letters expressing gladness because he had shown that a business man need not be a sordid money-maker; because he had given the example that Literature and Wall Street were compatible vocations. In 1876, when he reopened an office in the Street, the poet David Gray wrote:

> You are back in Wall Street. I suppose many of your friends regret the fact, and think you are losing time. I don't look at it in that way, I think a man can't get his full growth and strength in any other way than in honestly facing the music. What you lose by leaving your study will be made up to you in other ways. You will come out some day and give us a symphony that will take in and harmonize even the hell's voices of Wall Street. The poet is the man who must show us that this crazy world is cosmical, after all, and so save us from also going stark mad. And precisely when things are most wildly going to the devil, the poet is needed.

Toward the end of 1875, Stedman had gone to Aspinwall on confidential business for the Pacific Mail R. R. Company. A newspaper remark in the Springfield *Republican* concerning his trip brought a letter from the indignant traveller:

> An acquaintance sends me your friendly paragraph, in which I read that "Gould sent the poet Stedman down to the Isthmus." Bill Sikes had a dog, and Day and Martin kept a poet, but let me assure you, despite this contemptuous freedom with my name, that I am not precisely the man to be sent, kept, or possessed. It seems to me that I remember telling you, at the Century, that I went to Panama on other business, but that, being there, and being

a Wall Street man, and a journalist, I did look into the condition of Mr. Park's road, and naturally made it a prominent feature of the truthful and only letter which I wrote to the newspaper which that gentleman is suing—a newspaper of which I am, as you know, an old and frequent correspondent. My brother was the fiscal agent of the Panama Railroad, and died in the service, and I suppose no writer has a better knowledge of its history and condition than myself—despite the reports which you will soon have from the white-washing commissioners.

Permit me to add that Mr. Gould did *not* send me to the Isthmus, and that I went on business for other parties. I knew nothing of his speculations, but remember hearing that he was dangerously ill at the time of my departure.

Any Wall Street broker is glad to have Gould's deposits and orders, as the whole Street is dependent more or less on commissions received from himself and a few rival dealers. But I happen to be almost the only active man on 'Change who never has been favored with an order from him, or from his brokers, or fingered a dollar of his money.

I do not propose nor desire to contradict your thoughtless squib. Of course it will go all over the country—and I am too old a writer to chase after it—and so, much good may it do you! The *Sun* made a chance guess at something of the kind, but had more respect for my name, at least, than you have.

When I was an editor I never attacked an enemy without verifying my statements: never a *friend*, till I was positively compelled to.

What does the name of "poet" or "author" mean to me? Let me tell you. My last book cost me $20,000. in loss of time, health, business. If I ever get $4,000. from it, I shall do well. I am poor today, yet have had many chances here to make a fortune,—and many temptations. And just when I think that my name, at least, is worth something to me and my literary friends, the *Republican* says,—"Gould sent the poet Stedman, etc."

I have only patience to add, in justice to Mr. Reid, that he had no more to do with my journey South than had you or Mr. Dana.

From the editor of the *Republican*.

I assure you there was no purpose or thought of compromising you with the public, in any way, in the paragraph you criticise.

Its only purpose was to exhibit the ways and means of modern stock fighting and corporation controversy. Nor was it based on anything you said to me at the club. You only said you had been to the Isthmus and on business. The information came to us direct and explicit from a person prominently associated with Mr. Gould, who, among a variety of facts, said he had sent you down to the Isthmus for this purpose. I don't doubt you told the truth. I don't doubt your whole conduct in the matter was entirely honorable and self-respecting. I am very sorry that the *Republican* should have annoyed you in this way. It didn't mean to, but being a newspaper, it means to print everything that is news and that illustrates this funny, modern, intricate civilization of ours.

In December, 1877, a newspaper paragraph of a different nature caused Stedman to write: "The Chicago *Alliance* accuses me of faithlessness to Art, in being a broker! And here I haven't even a house to live in! This sort of thing hurts!" And he wrote to Professor David Swing, editor of the *Alliance:*

My attention recently was called to an article in the *Alliance* which purports to be a notice of my last volume of poems, but which consists chiefly of some remarks upon my daily habit of life. Upon reading it I resolved to write you a letter. I never have objected to a literary criticism, however severe its strictures. An author, publishing, invites both acknowledgment and censure, and accepts both in silence. But the article in question is unjust to my personal character, misconceives my condition in life, and does me a wrong—which I shall not resent, but against which it is my duty to protest. As editor of the *Alliance* you accept responsibility for what appears in its columns. Various cares and engagements have prevented my answer at an earlier date. It is as well, perhaps, that I have waited until my indignation and sense of pain are somewhat assuaged, so that my reply may be more becoming to us both than the careless statements which have provoked it.

Your arrow had a double barb. In the first place I could not expect it from such a source. I belong to a circle of those who have most deeply sympathized with your efforts in the cause of free thought, and have believed that with you—as with us—*good* *works* were held to be indispensable. Hence I was startled when I saw you loosely bolstering a theory by statements which you took no pains to verify. I said: "Well, it appears that I have thoroughly mistaken my man." Again: if there is a thing which can inflict a special wound, it is to have one's most conscientious actions—involving his prolonged self-denial, and demanding the fullest exercise of his manhood—so misconstrued as to be made the sole ground of opprobrium and attack. This, in public or private life, cuts him to the quick.

So, when I read your words, and quite independently of their outside effect, (for experience has taught me that in the end an author's own product is the chief thing that aids or injures him),—I said, "This is too bad!" I acknowledged to myself—"*This* hurts!"—Let me tell you why.

It characterizes me as a shocking example of the "school" of writers of "business men's poetry"; as one who *voluntarily* tries to unite the services of God and Mammon. It *conveys the impression* that I am devoted to making money; that I surrender the time which should be given to art to accumulating wealth as a stock-operator, and only give my leisure hours to poetry; that I am, in short, a mere money-chaser, and thus by choice an amateur or dilettante. This hypothesis may have formed itself in your mind from the vulgar newspaper-phrase "broker-poet" which paragraphers have attached to my name, and which is as unwelcome to me as the term "clergyman-editor" doubtless would be to you—and as utterly senseless. But, having postulated it, you lament a decline in my work, and that the "bright promise" of my "youth has not been verified," etc.

Verification is an important word. Let us see. You say that I have written some papers on the "minor English poets of our day," which, "notwithstanding the insufferable affectation of his title, *Minor Victorian Poets*, were well received." This sentence alone indicates the lax method of your article. The papers of which you speak form a large volume, the title being "Victorian Poets,"—only this and nothing more. It is devoted mainly to Tennyson, Browning, and other leading poets of the recent era. There are two chapters referring to those who, in comparison, may be termed minor poets. The book was published in Boston and in London. It has passed through various editions, and the title has been accepted, and has become a standard phrase with English writers.

Were I engaged in an open controversy, I might cite this inaccuracy.

Your hypothesis has just this basis of truth. I wish to live, and have dear ones for whose comfort and happiness I have taken sacred vows. Were I content to see them enduring the ills (to which you commend me) of absolute "poverty," I could not keep them even from cold and hunger by poetry alone. I *am* a member of the Stock Exchange,—one of the mass of hard-working brokers who there toil humbly and honestly for their daily bread. This is for me a cause neither of pride nor of complaint. Most authors who have not inherited property, and whose writings are of an æsthetic or philosophical kind, have to sustain themselves by some labor other than that nearest their hearts. In a preface to my first volume, written years ago, I find that its contents are said to be "the result of unequal moments, saved from that task-work which must first be met by every true man upon whom it is imposed." These words I should not be ashamed now to use, if I should ever again write any preface to a book of poems. You say of "the gentle Elia" that "he was none the less gentle for his thirty years' drudgery at the desk"; of Burns, that "his poetic gifts were not impaired," even if his heart was broken, by what Taine in his direct way calls his "dunghill and grocery work." Now, if I claim no parity with those fine beings in genius and renown, I at least can say that my "servitude" also is "involuntary." It was not the will, but the necessity, that gave consent. Many men whom you esteem and honor know this to be the truth, and are surprised by your gratuitous assumption of "Mr. Stedman's unfaithfulness to the talents given him."

They know the facts to be these. I married young and, owing to a chain of circumstances, found myself, upon a time, penniless; and with a family to support,—and had the choice of several modes of life, all of which you have seen exemplified in the careers of authors great and small: 1. I could leave my family to shift for themselves, fling my harp over my shoulder, and go on my tuneful way in quest of pleasure and fame. 2. I could support my household, and continue to write verses, by a process of credit and imposition; could borrow of friends, refuse to pay the baker and washerwoman, filk the butcher, and maintain the traditional right of bardlings to exemption from the claims of decency and honor; or, 3. I might work at some occupation which would enable me to earn an honest living, and write poetry when I found time, strength, and the heart to do so.

After trials, unnecessary to recount, I obtained a foothold as a journalist. For years I stood faithfully on it, living economically and paying my debts, but in constant fear with respect to the next week's expenses. To do my work well, after my own standard, required all my time and more than my strength. Nor can I follow any *professional* or *sedentary* calling, and find my brain equal to literary or creative work superadded. Such is my physical, or mental, infirmity. Finally, my health broke down,—so badly that I was forced to give up journalism as a regular means of support.

Through writing an occasional money-article I had gained some knowledge of my present occupation and took it up as a *dernier ressort*. To my surprise I found I could make a living; that I could have my evenings to myself and an occasional vacation—to which privileges I had been a stranger for years. For the first time I could renew the aspirations of a poet. In brief,—all of my books, prose and verse, good or bad, such as they are, with the exception of one little volume,—have been written during my experience as a Wall Street broker, at such times as I could command; and, if I had not been able to earn my living *here*, *they would not have been written at all.*

Let me at once acknowledge that the stern necessity of earning so much a week before I can write a line, interferes with and retards my literary work. My best hours are given, *most unwillingly*, to bread-and-butter drudgery. I never enter my office without a feeling of distaste and timidity, and have daily need of all the pluck at my command—and all the self-restraint. My "leisure-hours" are not given to poetry, for I have no leisure-hours. I avail myself of hours given by others to rest, health, pleasure. While I have, thus far, been able to secure a modest income by administering the trusts confided to me, I never have dared to imperil its security by launching out in the effort to make a fortune. Indeed, when having a little money ahead, I have several times left the "Street" altogether, and have been devoted to study and authorship, until my reserve was exhausted and I had to go back again. Thus it happens that I have not yet been able to own my own home, to keep a horse, or even to visit Europe—where I have so many friends and literary comrades, and whither I have longed for years to go. But I *have* had a modest subsistence, having educated my children—one of whom I have ventured, even, to send to College;—and have been able to write and print a few books whose merits are short, very far short, of my wishes and ideal. While regretting that you think so poorly of the little collection recently sent you, I indignantly deny that its demerits are the "inevitable penalty" of my "unfaithfulness" to the Muse.

There are many popular errors in relation to business in Wall Street. You hear of great speculations, of the ups and downs of a few leading names. But let me say that the rank and file of our brokers are, like myself, quiet men, keeping honestly within their means, toiling steadily to support their families, often men of fine taste and culture,—in fact, just like men working at any other craft or profession.

Were I writing this letter for publication you would gain one advantage: it would be very short, and to the point. But at present I have no wish to enter into controversy, public or private, or to exercise a talent for sarcasm. I have written this long letter, wholly about myself, to resist a wrong at the hands of one whom I have respected, and who has no right to forget the obligations of accuracy in statements that affect the *character* of a brother-writer, even though he may desire to point a moral and adorn a tale.

If you deprive me of the thanks of my conscience, you take away the best compensation which I have received for years of self-denial. However, I shall continue to resist temptation; shall claim no exemption from the duties which common honesty imposes, and shall be cheered, as heretofore, by the belief that all will come right in the end.

It is gratifying to read Professor Swing's answer:

Nothing is more painful to see in the critical world than its injustice. Few writers seem to attempt to say just what is right. The *Alliance* is no exception. Articles and paragraphs find their way into it which are only poisoned arrows which savagery loves to shoot. You blame me and, technically I am responsible, but not really. The article of which you complain I have not yet seen. Your letter was my first intimation that such an injustice had been done. Ill health has kept me at home for weeks past and I have seldom looked over my own paragraphs in the paper much less those of other pens. I entertain no such notions of you. I read your *Victorian Poets* with delight and my wife and daughter read the volume all through, and as for your poems have never dreamed that you were going to any form of the bad. I shall avail myself of an early opportunity to make use of the facts which you have placed in my hands.

March 12, 1877, Stedman records:

> Made $900. on my stocks. Can now repay the Dodges $2,000. more of my loan, and the interest. The first year of my business ends to-day. I have worked almost daily, like a slave, and have done better than I expected. Have *fought the battle out*, and shall try to have more time for writing, after this. I'll bet no other American poet has *made*, by his brains and audacity $15,000. the last twelve months—as I have in Wall Street, by careful risks. Out of this living (enormous) and paying debts, and helping friends.

Three months later he was amazed to find that he had made $5,000. more. Against this amount put the following statement of his assets from Literature:

> Received the pitiful sum of $22.70 from Osgood for six months copyright on *Victorian Poets* and *Collected Poems*. The brokers congratulate me on having "an income" outside of business! I am too ashamed for the honor of authorship to tell them the "bottom facts."

Mr. Howells in his "Literary Friends and Acquaintance" speaks of the advantage to Stedman in having a business: "He had not yet achieved that seat in the Stock Exchange whose possession has justified his recourse to business, and has helped him to mean something more single in literature than many more singly devoted to it. I used sometimes to speak about that with another eager young author in certain middle years when we were chafing in editorial harness, and we always decided that Stedman had the best of it in being able to earn his living in a sort so alien to literature that he could come to it unjaded, and with a gust unspoiled by kindred savors. But no man shapes his own life, and I dare say that Stedman may have been all the time envying us our tripods from his high place in the Stock Exchange."

The man of affairs who was also a poet found early that to follow his vocation cost him dear. During his absence in Cambridge, when delivering his poem before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, his clerks got his business snarled, involving a loss of at least $3,000.—"dear enough for the whistle. My literary work has cost me *fortunes*, first and last. But then I only transact business to obtain the means of writing."

Professor James Herbert Morse recalling Stedman as he was in 1877 says:

> In those days, Stedman, at forty-four, was in the prime of life, hard-worked in two fields,—in literature, and in the Board of Brokers, where the "ticker" was perpetually in hearing and the wild season of speculation might be expected every autumn when the crops were moving. Sometimes it came unexpectedly at other seasons. How much these two rival callings affected each other, he was fond of imagining, and these imaginings were not always suppressed. One evening the talk ran on this theme. His writing, he said, injured his standing as a man of business. Fewer orders came from those absorbed in large speculative schemes, whose success forbade, in their underlings, any dalliance with the Muses. Yet, on the other hand, his reputation as a man of letters held him back from undue indulgence on the field of speculative finance. He would not, he declared, risk his repute in the community as an author for any amount of reputation as a keen follower of the "chances" of the "Street." He had never failed in business, though, through no act of his own, he more than once had been on the threshold of failure. When, from various causes, he was down, it was in him to pluck up courage; when he was up, he was generous of time, of kindness, of forgivenesses—qualities that made it impossible that he should ever build large castles except "in Spain." The largest he ever accomplished of the more substantial sort was on the coast of New Hampshire, and that he made everybody's castle when he could. . . . In 1877 he told me that the year, though not in general kind to Wall Street, had yielded him an average of $1,000 a month.

Yes! But 1877, which had proved so fair a friend was to turn false, and on its last day. On the night of December 31, Stedman wrote in his diary:

> I am not soon to forget this year, *this week* above all! This morning, at the opening of the Exchange Bonner's great failure and fraud was announced. He has all my securities, and has rehypothecated them—stealing the margin, $5,500., *all* the money of my own saved in these desperate two years. Have made it my first business to secure every cent I owe to others. Thank heaven, I am *just* solvent! And I am too stunned to-night to think of our future, and of Arthur at College—of my weakness and the dark future. Shall not tell Laura till after New Year's.

Five days afterward he took up the bonds stolen from him, by paying the full market-price, and with an aching heart continued to fulfill his duties. "Another scare to-day. The D——s have mislaid a certificate of mining stock delivered to them a year ago. *Thank God* it is in Mrs. —— name, not mine, if it is stolen! But if ever I get out of this accursed business of handling client's securities, and being the victim of robbery and fraud—I'll live in a garret, if need be. I have been swindled so much that I am in a perpetual state of terror."

> September 23, 1878. My trial-balance shows painfully the losses and sorrows of the last nine months. Have not been so poor since I started business. As I will never imperil the trusts confided to me, I shall *stop* business, the moment I see my private funds near an end, and while still solvent.
>
> October 10, 1878. To-day a long expected blow, my unseen client at L—— draws suddenly for the proceeds of $9,000. bonds I have had in charge for eight months—forcing me to close out all my own affairs at another loss to remit to him. But I am able to do it—though it leaves me helpless. But if I ever should fail to meet such a call, I think it would *kill me*. Can anything be darker? Yes, loss of honor.
>
> October 14, 1878. This A. M. closed up my "shorts" at a profit of $525.—the first for weeks. Put them out in the P. M. 2 higher —when a trick sprung upon the market by Gould foists it 4 *higher*

still, and my exact profits are gone to-night, with a prospect of worse to-morrow. What a year!

November 3, 1878. Yesterday, owing to the panic down-town, was almost as anxious a morning as our marriage-morning so many years ago. How absurd! A silver wedding at 45.

January 6, 1879. Have sent out, at last, business circulars to all my rich acquaintances and others of the Century, etc. After all, why shouldn't I do their investing, as well as others no honester nor abler than myself? No one yet, thank Heaven, has had occasion to accuse me of lack of care or morality in business matters.

April 4, 1879. Everything in life comes too late. Jay Gould to-day makes overtures for business, which I dare not undertake on account of my health, etc., and small means—but three years ago would have been a fortune to me.

May 15, 1879. In a little over five months have made $11,000. *above my living*. *Was* ever poet so trusted before. It seems a new miracle—Could now go on, and unless I am the victim of a new fraud, get rich. Probably my last chance; but I am *worn down*, and *must* go abroad.

In April, 1879, he had declined the nomination for a four years term on the Governing Committee of the New York Stock Exchange. The Summer months of 1879 were passed in England. Upon his return in October, Stedman found great excitement in the market and by the middle of November had made $15,000., and had bought a house at No. 71 West Fifty-fourth Street during the most fortunate week pecuniarily since his entrance to Wall Street in 1864.

In a few days came a sudden reaction in the market.

So much expended on weak customers that I can't close out without risk unless I sacrifice them. Am trying to save them, but fear I shall lose heavily. They *would not* sell when I urged them. A fearful crash, long expected by *me*, in the market. Was too weak-hearted yesterday. The "lambs" I tried to save have lost all, and hit me for $14,000! more. Enough gone in one day to pay the mortgage on my house. Half my brilliant earnings. But I have a good working balance left. Was up till midnight, clearing away the wreck. Am too exhausted to realize the sudden and tremendous change. What a strange business!

At the beginning of the year 1880, Stedman took his son, Frederick Stuart, as his partner: it was an auspicious opening; within six weeks the firm had made $18,000. By another year Stedman felt that at last he had his one chance if, as he notes, "I can *only* reduce these mortgages, pay the Dodges, keep some health, and write my book!" But, "it seems as if the strain would kill me, although I appear to be succeeding." "I work and watch every minute of every day in the Board. It does not do for me to make a single false move." In April, 1882, he was elected a member of the new Chicago Exchange. In May, with his younger son Arthur, Stedman left for several months of rest in Italy. The morning after they were settled in Venice a cablegram recalled Stedman who instantly returned in time to prevent utter ruin—"owing to terrible mismanagement." "I found all my customers, also, cleaned out. Am at a loss as to the most wise course. . . . Fortunately, all my *trust* monies are safe: it would kill me outright to have *others* lose by me or my agent."

July 15, 1882. Have been too much prostrated with the intense heat of New York, and absorbed in the remarkable stock-market, to do anything this week except avail myself of the chance to recover . . . and to rest in the evening. As it is, have not written a word on Emerson this week. The heat and uproar on 'Change have been dreadful—abhorrent! Have lost eight pounds of flesh in twelve days—and cannot sleep nights. This is not my fault, nor have I any desire in life except to follow my natural bent—as a student and writer: but here I am, working to save property entrusted to my care. . . . And I am run down by all the impecunious writers in America—without the head to shake them off. Why is it that when a man hasn't brains enough, and pluck enough, to earn his bread—he sets up as an "author" or "poet"—and wants me to speculate for him?

To Constance F. Woolson he writes in November, 1882:

You know of my trouble, flight from beautiful Venice to arid, sordid, fiery New York in midsummer. A sudden and perilous misfortune brought me home. Instead of finishing my book abroad,—of seeing Italy and Spain,—of seeing you with your green new wreaths of laurel,—I have passed a half-year of really desperate gambling, here, and have but just retrieved the disaster that brought us home. A half-year almost wasted, and gone out of one's brief life. I should say *quite* wasted, had I not managed to write my essay on Emerson; no light matter! 'T was finished last month, but will not come out before the March *Century*.

In August, 1883, came the black day of Stedman's life, which, he says, gave him a "row to hoe" for the rest of his life. For some months there had been a bad decline bringing his resources dangerously low, and at the beginning of the month he writes: "Terribly depressed about the loss of our capital. Nearly all gone in two years—yet I have managed as wisely as I could. Have been too lenient with clients whom I have considered friends, and who now do not pay one cent of their obligations to me—when *I* am in need. I shall be fifty next October, and having little left "but honor," I don't intend to have anybody's pity. Shall sell out everything, pay my debts, and go into obscurity, owing no one money or an explanation—if worse comes to worse."

August 12, feeling that things looked, "nervous" in New York, Stedman returned from a brief outing to help run his office. He found that the son, whom he had trusted, had through mistaken judgment brought failure upon the firm. August 14, 1882, Stedman closed up all contracts, regardless of loss, and raised his loans, "before any guess was made that things were wrong. Meantime the worst panic for years. Having paid every debt and loan on 'Change—made an assignment to-day. Have made this failure to protect Fred. Despite my losses, Reid, Phelps, Dodge—noble friends—offered to see me through. But with all the uncertainties, the only honest course was to suspend. Overwhelmed by the kindness of everybody—of the newspapers, as well."

To Thomas B. Aldrich.

August 17, 1883.

Your letter has brought the big tears to my eyes. Nothing can ever come between us henceforth—nothing probably would, in any event,—but our tie is stronger than ever. I received your telegram yesterday, and answered it. Many letters pour in, which a friend is answering for me, but to you no one must write but myself.

Think of it! What a fortunate chance that some sense of danger brought me down from your house *that Sunday night.* As I looked at the sea, I so hated to leave, and had *almost* changed my mind. If I had tarried *one* day longer this affair, sorrowful as it is, would have been multiplied *ten-fold.* The most sweeping ruin, dishonor, every conceivable ill—would have come upon me. My *chance* arrival saved $75,000. for my clients and contracts—gave me *one day* to liquidate quietly—gave me time to make an assignment, and save my son from worse, even, than his present disgrace and danger. You never can understand how *much* I did, without betraying the crisis, in that extra day.

As it is, my banking capital is gone—I am in a sea of doubt and trouble—but have averted dishonor, saved my *confidential* and my *Wall Street* engagements, *saved many humble friends from ruin.* . . . The New Castle house shall be built, depend on't, if I build it with my own hands. What! Leave a tower of Babel on that Point! Stedman's Monument to Failure! No, the work goes right on. My friends will hold it for me. Laura will stay where she is at present. Thank God she isn't here.

I couldn't have stood this at all, but for the goodness of friends, the manifestations of my fellow-brokers, and the *camaraderie* of the journalists—for I am not so vain as to think I merit what the newspapers have said of me. A few scoundrels have stirred up a host of good men and true. Of course I was worried about the general condition here when I left you . . . and thought it just as well to come on. But what a revelation!—It took, you see, the worst market for years . . . to throw your friend at last.

Well, I have lots of trouble yet before me. But I have had no time to reflect—only to act—and perhaps the blow was lightened by its suddenness and completeness. A good sleep last night has made me feel strong to-day, and like pouring out my heart to you.

No man who had not a sound heart would have written such a letter as I received from Mr. Houghton to-day. It bears out your remark about him.

The beautiful home in Fifty-fourth Street was now leased, and narrower quarters secured. The comfortable business offices were given up, and a small room occupied at No. 17 New Street. On December 28, 1883, having settled his debts, he applied for re-admission to the Board, whose "grave and reverend" Committee on January 3, 1884, re-admitted him at once to active membership. As the day following was a Friday, he would not return to the Board that day as "One must respect traditions." But on Saturday he went on 'Change for the first time, receiving an ovation, and was hand-shaken warmly by some five hundred men.

"It breaks my heart with weariness," he writes to Mrs. Albert Bierstadt, "as I look at the work on the table before me, yet here I am putting my *feelings* on paper (a rare thing for me of late years) and filling up the brief space in which I bethought myself to please you with such town-news as reaches me. At least I must thank you for your letter of pleasure at my reinstatement. The scholar's delightful indolence crept over me once more, during the few months when I stayed up town, and smoked, and wrote at my will. Gods! *how* I hated to go back to meaner things. Nothing but the great value of the 'Seat' to my family, in case of my death, and the will to have absolute vindication, led me to accept it again. For I found that we could *live* on the rent of Laura's house added to my literary income—provided I should write altogether. Yes, and a quiet happy life—writing *poetry*. Think of what duty has compelled me to give up."

To his Mother.

January 4, 1884.

You see I am back again in the Board, and I have your card of pleasure. The newspapers this evening speak very kindly of my return. My old friend Bromley, in the *Commercial*, has a good word. He came down and paid up a large debt he owed me, which was of great help. The reason I don't write you fully of my plans is that I have *none* as yet: am quite in doubt as to my best course. When I see my way clear, you shall know all about it. There are many lions in the path still. I suppose you know that, at the last, I was compelled to borrow $8,700. from four friends, and that Walter Phelps and Whitelaw Reid let me have $5,000. of it at once, on my notes bearing interest. I must at once try to earn this $8,700. and also some balances due to women, like Mrs. Croly. These are all sacred debts—but the loans have enabled me to secure the seat with its Life Insurance, (worth in all $35,000., in case of my death), to Laura and Arthur.

January 16, 1884, his diary contains this entry:

Sick and staggering but *had* to go downtown and stand in the Board. Received an offer of partnership—most flattering—$15,000. a year! Too sick to accept it, for it will require all my strength, and render it impossible for me to write evenings and sit up late—so that I could not finish "Poetry in America," etc. It is a fearful temptation, but I have few years left for my true work, and must refuse it. Can make a *living*, at least, I think, and retain my freedom also.

Slowly, with utmost determination, through a bad market he drew ahead, and, as he had agreed, was able at the close of the year to meet the interest, also part of the principal, on his borrowed money. To that end, he conserved every cent, feeling that whereas other demands arose, it simply would not be honest for him to utilize the money for any other purpose. Entries in his diary are illuminating:

January 2, 1885. Paid, with the greatest difficulty, to-day, semi-annual interest on the money loaned me a year ago—and 25% of the principal to Homans and Stowe—as they are in the Board and need it. Wrote my dear friends Phelps and Reid to have patience. Meantime they have security and good interest. It leaves me, literally, without a *cent* of *cash*, although we have real estate and my Board seat.

February 16, 1885. My heart is almost broken—with my continued misfortunes. My affairs still worse to-day. What little I have is simply *torn* from me by wolves. Without youth or capital, how can I recover from this condition? Of course, but for my friends, I would not *attempt* to; could live frugally, and earn my little wants by the work that is my true *métier*.

June 9, 1885. Received $225. from the *Century* for my article "The Twilight of the Poets." It all goes, and $15. more, to pay interest on money borrowed of my friends—and I have been three months writing it at night.

Daily, he who had intended to be free to employ his whole time in literary work, stood for six hours on the floor of the Stock Exchange, and, at night, though exhausted, refusing to see anybody, or to join in any social relaxation so necessary to him, he worked until 1 or 2 A. M. completing his "Poets of America," and working also on his compilation "A Library of American Literature." In 1894, he wrote to Mr. Gilder: "My waste of the last ten years in Wall Street has not been one of money-seeking—for I could have made more elsewhere—but of a ceaseless struggle to get out of old obligations. Still, I have written the 'Poets of America,' the 'Nature and Elements,' etc."

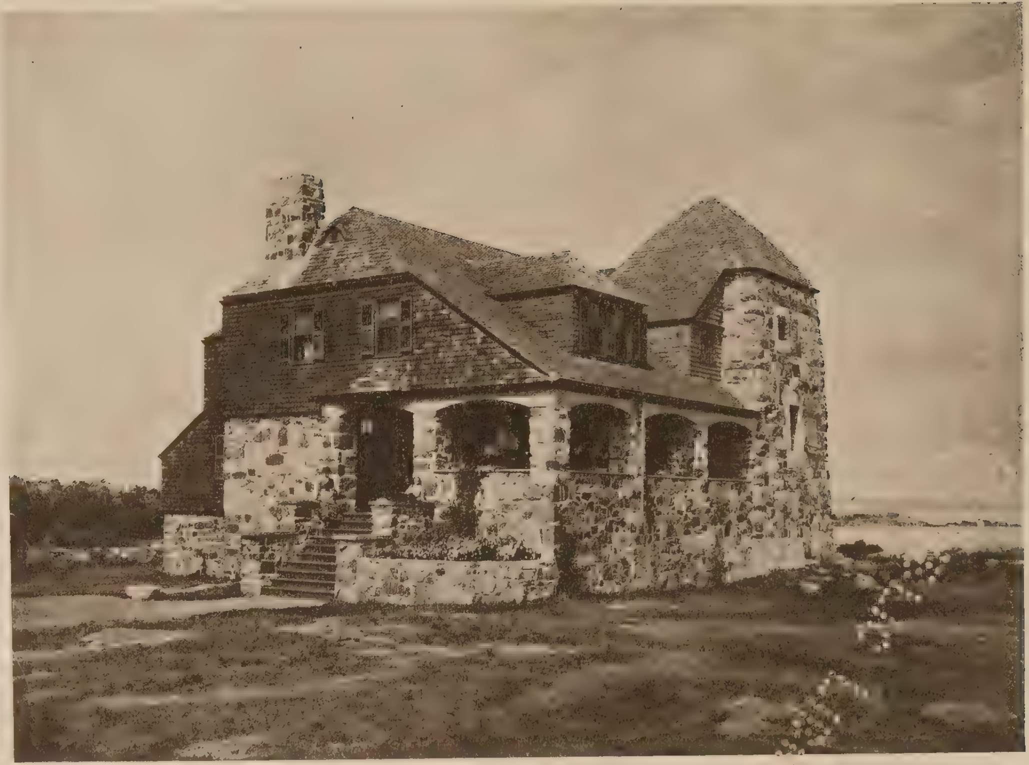
Late in the Summer of 1882, Stedman had visited John Albee's quaint old place at New Castle, N. H. He found the region "a charming 'arrangement' of sea and shore," and the poet-philosopher, John Albee, an ideal person for a neighbor. The following Spring, Stedman bought from this neighbor a piece of beautiful land on Jaffray Point, and started the erection of a house planned by himself. Several months of the Summer of 1883 were passed in a rented cottage at Jaffray Point, so that he could watch and superintend the building. Great rocks covered with kelp jutted far into the water from the shore of his property, and so he named "his little Paradise" —"Kelp Rock." Much of the house was built of the natural colored stones and pebbles from the beach—and these were largely gathered by the poet himself. An entry in his diary for June, 1883, reads:

Have had a leaden box made, to place in the foundation walls of our New Castle Tower. The same to contain: 1. Mother's poems, 2. Poems by E. C. S., 3. "Victorian Poets," 4. "Edgar Allan Poe," 5. John Albee's Poems, 6. Celia Thaxter's Poems, 7. Portsmouth and New York papers, 8. Plan of the house and town, with architect's account of same, 9. Print of the Wentworth House, 10. Coins of the United States for 1883, and Brooklyn Bridge medal, 11. Photographs of E. C. S., L. H. S., F. S. S. and wife and baby, A. G. S. 12. Memorandum of the whole. I wonder how many hundred years must pass before these will come to light again. The freak grows out of Albee's lamenting that he can find no records under the corners of Jaffray House.

In August when that tragic black day came in his financial affairs, Stedman vowed that in some right way the building of "Kelp Rock" should continue. This he accomplished. And he was also enabled to furnish the house simply with rare colonial furniture found in Boston, and in Portsmouth. Although he was not to enjoy many Summers there, the few weeks, that his affairs and his conscience allowed him to snatch every year, were, as he would say, "very Heaven." A guest-book tells of the interesting visitors who wandered thither, and their comments indorse Stedman's praise of the lovely region. One of these, for instance, Miss Harriet McEwen Kimball, wrote:

Here by the singing sea
  No other voice should be heard,
Whether a poet's rhyme
  Or the note of a passing bird,
So I leave on this silent page
  Only a written word.

In his little tower-study, especially when a Sou'easter was blowing high the surf, Stedman used to write; or, before its great fire of drift-wood, play on his accordion tunes familiar to his boyhood. On such a day, if a guest chanced in, there was certain to be a genuine Scotch toddy brewed from the kettle on the old crane. At eventide, he liked to swing in his hammock on his *loggia* overhanging the ocean and the picturesque reefs for—



"KELP ROCK," NEW CASTLE, N. H., BUILT BY STEDMAN IN 1883

The sunset fires old Portsmouth spires,
  Out creeps the ebbing tide;
Beyond the battery-point I see
  A glimmering schooner glide;
White flares the turning Whale-back light,
  The silent ground swell rolls;
Low and afar shines one red star
  Above the Isles of Shoals.

In the *Critic* series, "Authors at Home," November 14, 1885, Anna Bowman Dodd—whom Stedman deeply admired—gives this picture:

> In his present study in the little house in Thirtieth Street there are several photographs scattered about the room of a quaint and picturesque seaside house. This is the summer home on the island of New Castle, N. H. It has a tower which seems to have been built over the crest of the waves, and a *loggia* as wide and spacious as a Florentine palace. No one but a sailor or a sea-lover could have chosen such a spot. To Mr. Stedman, New Castle was a veritable *trouvaille.* It fulfilled every condition of pleasure and comfort requisite in a summer home. The sea was at his doors, and the elms and fields ran down to meet it. The little island, with its quaint old fishing village, its old colonial houses, its lanes and its lovely coast line, is the most picturesque of microcosms ever set afloat. There is no railroad nearer than three miles, and to reach it one crosses as many bridges as span a Venetian canal. Mr. Stedman himself, the poet John Albee, Barrett Wendell (one of Boston's clever young authors), Prof. Bartlett, of Harvard, and Jacob Wendell's family, make a charming and intimate little coterie. At Kelp Rock Mr. Stedman is only the poet, the genial host and the *bon camarade.* Business cares and thoughts are relegated to the world whence they came. The most approachable of authors at all times, at New Castle, with the sea and the sunshine to keep his idleness in countenance, he seems fairly to irradiate companionship. His idleness is of an order to set the rest of the world a lesson in activity. In his play he is even more intense, if possible, than in his work. The play consists of five or six hard-writing hours in his tower during the morning. This is followed by an afternoon of sailing, or fishing, or walking, any one

of which forms of pleasure is planned with a view to hard labor of some kind, some strenuous demand on the physical forces. The evening finds him and his family, with some of the group mentioned and often with stray visitors from the outer world, before the drift-wood fire in the low-raftered hall, where talk and good-cheer complete the day.

In 1886, Stedman was able to refund 25% of the money borrowed from his four friends, and to pay off some of the debts to those who had released him, but from which debts he had never released himself:—"Sent Mrs. Croly $350., which I have saved with great difficulty this season, towards paying in full the balance of which she released me. *She shall never lose a cent by E. C. S.*"

November 23, 1886, he was elected a member of the Governing Committee of the Stock Exchange in the place of the late Laurens Joseph. He had previously refused to be a candidate for the office, but now felt that he must not decline. "It is a laborious honor, but I accept it as a great compliment, and an intentional *rehabilitation*." He kept his firm hand on the tiller amid dangerous breakers, and periodical cyclones, slowly, but surely, bringing his craft to port. On April 22, 1889, he was able to pay the loan to his dear comrade Whitelaw Reid, who in thanking him said: "I am delighted you are able to pay it, and sorry you felt bound to pay it just now. It was a great pleasure to be of any service, even so little as this loan was, in your time of trouble, and it is a still greater pleasure to find that you have successfully weathered this as well as the other storms which have come in pitiless succession." In 1909, when sending his large number of letters from Mr. Stedman for use in this book, Mr. Reid wrote: "A few of them are particularly precious to me because of their expressions concerning the help Walter Phelps and I were able to give your Grandfather when he was overtaken by misfortunes in the Street. We advanced the small capital on which he began business again; and this he scrupulously paid interest on from the start, and paid it off by installments out of his profits. There never was a more fastidiously honest business man."

In the Autumn of 1889, the Wall Street sea grew very rough. For six years Mr. Stedman had stood on the bridge of his boat, ready to face any late claim which might arise from the failure of 1883. The new perils were disheartening, but he breasted the high waves, and was able to buy once more a home: this time at 137 West Seventy-eighth Street. In the panic of 1890 the following note appears in his diary:

> November 19, 1890. The anniversary of my dear, dear Mother's death—and the blackest day, for years, except *that* day, of her struggling, aging, helpless son's life. *To-day I could not even go to her grave*—but was compelled to surrender my last hope of retaining my Seat and Life Insurance, and was only saved from public failure by the goodness of my friend Cyrus O. Baker.

A week later he was forced to borrow from his "generous" cousin, Mr. William E. Dodge. "It will alleviate, but not *cure*, my troubles. He did so much for me years ago, that I am ashamed to trouble him: but I know no more loyal and powerful friend—though I do nothing for him."

Important entries in his diaries show the continuance of his valiant struggle:

> January 13, 1892. My New Year's balance comes out right, and for once *on the mend*. I hope yet to turn the dark lane of eight years!

On December 2, 1892, concerning the death of Jay Gould, his diary records: "*His* crimes and distresses are alike ended. As for us, as for me, I almost envy him. We have been contemporary in age and in Wall Street. He leaves $100,000,000. —and gained his object. I have not, in all, more than 3 days' *interest* on that, but wealth has not been my object. And we have, neither, had much comfort."

Stedman sold his Seat on the Chicago Stock Exchange, May 11, 1894. Entries in the diary read:

> September 14, 1895. Terrible panic renewed. On Monday I

felt *safe*, with some ease as to money, the result of months of anxious toil in the hot city. To-day, simply for lack of *ordinary* capital, I find myself almost stripped, and the worst yet to come. Without capital one cannot stand nor avoid the *petty* accidents of business.

January 1, 1896. Odd, that after forty years in New York, and with no end of respectability "thrust upon me," I begin the year with $500. of *small* bills *due*, and $500. interest to pay before February—with $16,000. due my friend Baker and others against my "Seat"—with two just now unsalable houses, heavily mortgaged,—with a business that pays me *nothing*—with a shrinkage during '95 on all my property—with little of my own save copyrights (reduced) by Webster's failure;[1] finally, with a general panic caused by the Government, just as things were mending!

In January, 1896, Mr. Stedman sold his home "Kelp Rock" at New Castle, N. H., and the house on Seventy-eighth Street, New York, and purchased a Colonial house at Lawrence Park, Bronxville, N. Y.—"A chance to reduce largely my expenses, and secure a 'retreat.'" He felt that the Fates were steadily driving him out of Wall Street life, while offering nothing in its place; and as he grew older he found that he was unable to work consecutively at his writing. April 30, 1896, Chairman Mitchell of the Stock Exchange died suddenly, and without warning Mr. Stedman was called to decide whether he would accept the vice-chairmanship. "A new trade, $6,000. a year and positive slavery, and total abandonment of literature henceforth—or to stay free as a chronic debtor can be! A most painful dilemma. Of course, few have a chance of a $6,000. place at sixty-two."

The call of Literature made him decide to retain his freedom. His loyalty was repaid by a splendid year of exciting business in 1897, bringing him "small results compared with those gained by others, but enough to let a bright ray into our gloom of years;" and he realized that, if his strength held out, he would be square with his friends.

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[1] The publisher of "A Library of American Literature."

Three years later a similar position was open, and how he felt is clear from a letter to his friend and office mate, Cyrus O. Baker, with whom were intimate associations during the last fifteen years of Mr. Baker's life:

> Your note is characteristically thoughtful. I noticed in this morning's *Tribune* the Ely bulletin, and thought what a difference it would have made in my life if I could have had that secretaryship after my troubles in '83, or even ten years ago! But alas, I may as well—in my feebleness and humiliation at this very hour—look the stern facts in the face. I am not, and never again shall be, equal to that post—with all the labor and ability which it requires. Like Mr. Tupman—I am "too old," yes, and "too fat" and now fat-witted. It is simply a case of *non possumus*. Every *chance* has come at the wrong time for me, in my life, except the chance of meeting such a friend and comrade as you have been. What else I have won—and you can say the same of yourself—has been by my own exertions, by wrenching it from adverse Fate.
>
> Moreover, the Exchange would not feel justified (and would not be) in giving that now important office to "a green hand" 66 years old—a nervous wreck at that.

The burden of years was making it plain to Mr. Stedman that he must sell his "Seat." No longer could he work with the old zest on the familiar Floor. It was time for him to win for himself—peace, which never was to be his, during the years remaining to him. Pathetic is every page of his diary, and likewise are many personal letters. While in his home circle he could tear aside the veil to reveal the gnawing grief, his dauntless spirit braved the public with his customary smile. His own words tell the story of these final months.

> January 13, 1899. I start the New Year, with the first chance to get out of debt which I have seen in sixteen sad years. If only I can have the physical strength for one last effort—can "begin life" again, and do a life's work in six months—at the age of sixty-five.
>
> December 20, 1899. A year ago, I had at last a good business. My year's illness has lost it, my customers, my little means. But my Seat has risen so, that I can pay all debts and have some

money, and "look around"—old as I am, and possibly also write. During two years of illness, for the first time in thirty years, I have been unable to keep this current record. My work and experiences will be traced in my letter books. It has been all work, illness, poverty, and Anthology—nothing else.

January 29, 1900. Sold my "Seat" in the New York Stock Exchange for $39,500. less a commission, etc. This ends a membership of thirty and one-half years (since the Summer of 1869), and is like tearing a tree up by the roots. All this time I have walked that floor, until its tragedies and comedies—its drama—its friendships in battle and in action—in success and despair—have become a part of my life. It is the first chance, in seventeen years, for retiring with honor, though half the money goes to liquidate my debts to my dear comrade Baker who has carried me through evil times. And I am at best leaving the *raft* which has given me support since my ship was scuttled in 1883. Here at sixty-six, I don't know whether I have strength to live by writing, and I have no other means of support. It *is* a jump into the big sea—and to swim or sink. Am still liquidating my business. My seat is sold at the highest price (within $40,000. yet known). It has risen $25,000. in three years and probably will go higher. But I don't dare to run the risk of a decline, and of ruining the chance to close up "with honor."

February 15, 1900. Received price for my "Seat" and ceased to be a member of the Stock Exchange, at 12.30 P. M.—at 3 P. M. a Loving Cup was presented me, in the Bond Room, by 150 of my late associates, with a warm-hearted, but quite too eulogistic, speech by S. V. White—to which I responded as best I might; of course touched by the sentiment exhibited. Spoke on the business and literary pursuits, etc. (Mr. W. disturbed me by still using that old epithet—"banker-poet.") Wrote Lucius N. Robinson. Paid Phelps Estate $503.—the last of the $8000. borrowed from four friends in 1883. Have now, at least, after seventeen years, paid every legal debt I owe, but have little money left, *very* little, at sixty-six (!) and the outlook is rather dark—after my long illness and expense.

February 23, 1900. Am quite a sufferer in the cardiac region from the necessary work. Am almost humiliated in my own feelings by the eulogies lavished upon me by the press. I suppose I *am* honest in many matters—but such adjectives as "stainless" make me feel almost a hypocrite. Then, too, they all speak of my "fortune." I would it existed. They think I am to have perfect leisure to write fine works—whereas, I am frightened at the prospect. —What do we know of one another, anyhow? But I *am* out of debt for the moment: and I am glad to be liked—whether I deserve it or not. Still, on reflection, it seems to me a big "Stedman myth."

The beautiful and tasteful silver Loving Cup presented to Mr. Stedman, "in token of affectionate esteem," by one hundred and fifty of the best of his fellow members gave him a peculiar joy. Gratefully he used to look at it, show it with admiration to visitors, and on especial occasions it was used in his home as a punch-bowl. His old comrade S. V. White in presenting the gift with an address and a poem said such words as these:

> The author of "Thanatopsis" wrote that view of death while yet in college, and his later works outside of his editorial field were few and far between. Bayard Taylor gave up literature before he took up statecraft. Longfellow and Lowell are said to have lived at ease on ancestral patrimony, while Holmes wrote as a pastime to a medical practice. To you it was reserved to be at once banker and poet and to achieve success in both.
>
> Clarence, when we shoved you and roughed it together on this floor we never for a moment forgot that you lived in another realm. We had improved on the herdsmen of Admetus. When Apollo dwelt with them they did not know him as the sun god. But all through our work here we were "on to your curves" in another sphere, and a jaunty *boutonnière* of laurel in memory of the lamented Daphne was tossed you in our minds day by day as you worked with us.

With sincerity, Mr. Stedman could reply that since he was to be praised and to receive so gracious and charming a token, he would rather have the experience on this occasion of his retirement from the Stock Exchange. Continuing, he said:

> For years I never turned the Trinity corner without bracing my-

self to overcome a feeling that I was not to the manner born, and that I had no practical claim to a foothold here; moreover, that one open to the dangerous suspicion of being a writing man could not be a good enough dealer to be taken seriously by himself or his fellows. Nor can I comprehend how I have stayed here so long as to be looked upon by newcomers as a veteran in age and experience. So it is worth much to be mustered out with this honorable discharge—worth even more to receive this proof of the fact that we have got on so well in our personal associations. There is no cohesion of men like that of those brought together day after day, year after year, within the close guarded arena of the Stock Exchange—not in the Army or Navy, nor in the mining camp as depicted by Bret Harte. On the "floor" men talk and trade in the white heat of action, form friendships or rivalries and dislikes, help and are helped, and watch one another from youth to age. There is no possible concealment of one's traits. As among boys in school life, every man's temper, character, his moral and physical weaknesses, and usually his resources, are well understood. So there is no certificate of good conduct better than yours. Certainly no symbol of friendship could be more welcome than this, after the leagues and tussles of the third of a century. I do not know how much this beautiful cup is able to contain, but am assured that it holds at this moment the hearts of a hundred men. Whatsoever its dimensions, if I were to fill it with my gratitude, and pour it out, and so to fill and pour it twice and thrice again, it would still flow over. I have no closer friends than those before me. It would be strange indeed if in the life down here I had not made enemies, but both they and I have outlived enmity. In any case, there is nothing better, except an old friend, than a good old foe.

I think it was Bulwer of whom it was said that he was a man of letters among men of the world, and a man of the world among men of letters. There is an implied criticism here, which one well might dread to incur. This send off from you assures me that I have not incurred it, in so far as my Wall Street associates are concerned. Now, sir, I have just met an uptown friend who said, "I see that you are no longer going to lead a 'double life.'" Less euphemistic than you, he didn't have the grace to use the word "dual," but went on to express the same old surprise that a man engrossed in Wall Street life could do anything as a student or writer. I told him that there was no "Mr. Hyde" in this duality, and asserted that it required more brain and will power for a writer to enter business life and even hold his own, or get out at least with his sidearms, than for a financier to essay another profession. There are scores of men down here, I said, who, if they put their culture and talents to use in literature would show results averaging as well as those of a similar number of my brethren of the quill.

You make my parting as sweet a sorrow as such a thing can be, but it is a wrench—the turning up of an old tree by the roots. The stock market has had no absorbing fascination for me: it has given me a living during years when there was no adequate literary market, and the means and occasional leisure for the specific writing that I set out to do. None the less shall I miss these daily affiliations, and even the work on the "floor." Dr. Holmes made his convict in the treadmill say:

> . . . When they let me out
> And I am better grown
> Now, hang me! but I mean to have
> A treadmill of my own.

If I set one up, it will not grind out stock quotations, though in time it may produce something relating to life on 'Change. In such case it will not stint in paying tribute to the manliness, the honor, justice and magnanimity that are found here as fully as in any other place where all sides of human character are represented; not only because these are the qualities of a stock exchange, but because yours is an American exchange, and I think that Americans, and those that stay here long enough to become assimilated, display these qualities more instinctively than the people of most other climes.

His friends and fellow members of the Stock Exchange again honored their associate: after his death perpetuating his memory by contributing $2,000. to be used in furnishing a room in the Keats-Shelley house at Rome.

Mr. Stedman was to fulfill the promise made to his friends that day of the presentation of their Loving Cup, and November, 1903, the *Century Magazine* contained an essay "Life 'On the Floor' " "designed solely to give some notion of that life upon its floor which has seldom, if ever, been reported except from the casual visitor's point of view."

"After all," he says, "to the man who lives it continually, the life itself is what most concerns him, though this he may not realize until his share of it is spent and the market that has known him shall know him no more forever." Space will not permit the inclusion of the whole of the essay, but may we not insert this passage:

> I am not unconscious that into this report of the broker's daily life the rumble of the Board has entered, and something of its crush and speed. It is hard to escape the broad impression while essaying the realistic capture of details best known to those who move among them. Confused as they seem, they make up an entity, in which the molecules of life and labor are as distinct and vibratory as those in other organisms great or small. The present exhibit might serve as a prelude to a leisurely series of sketches, with a more varied range than the South Sea House or Inner Temple afforded, of the fellow-captives of a modern Elia. With what tenderly whimsical appellatives he would apostrophize them right and left! His heart would go out to the modest, consumptive German who bought and sold "St. Paul" all day for wealthier members that he might obtain from every clime additions to his collection of lepidoptera—one of the richest known to entomologists. Peace to his grave, and may golden-winged butterflies flutter over it in Summer days! Our limner would have a smile for the soft-voiced weakling, heavily weighted by a historic name and strayed into this most unfit vocation, who, oblivious of the orders given him in kindness by his associates, sat in the market's fiercest turmoil drawing pallid landscapes, when all about him were either triumphant with good fortune, or helpless before disaster. Here, too, he would have found that happy-go-lucky child of France, whose wit restored him again and again to the Floor, after his conscienceless hazards had been harmful to himself and all concerned—an irresponsible egoist, who, when he put the question, "How do you feel to-day?" and received a cheery answer, impatiently avowed: "I don't care about your health: I mean, how do you feel about the market?" He it was who always, when a venture failed, declared, "*I* was right enough. It was the market that was all wrong." His memorialist would share the regard felt for a clerkly member, browed like the Stratford bust, by whom the remotest annals and traditions of the Exchange are preserved as admirably

as those of the papal succession in the mind of a Vatican camerlingo. He would stretch out both hands to that standing member of the Governing Committee, daily surveying the Room with patriarchal mien—one whose brusque consideration has tided over many a limping broker who has been summoned before his judicial mercy-seat (for such it is), and has found its occupant more than a little blind to his shortcomings. He would recognize, as does the Floor, the underlying virtues of those ingrained pessimists who earn the prænomen of "Calamity," and of whom it is reported that they give their entertainments in the cemetery, and postpone them if the weather chances to be fair. Beyond question he would fraternize with the bibliomaniacs, whose profits go so largely into incunabula, and whose collections are of international fame. Nor would he fail to embalm, in turn, the connoisseur, with his score of Corots, Innesses, Martins, and the Old Beau and virtuoso, worshipper of feminine loveliness, to whose foible a generation yet unborn will owe the privilege of seeing the beauty of ancestresses that sat to his miniaturist. Nor would the orator of the Board be forgotten, learned in law, and with the classics at his tongue's end, a historic factor in the mart's vicissitudes, and one of the trio still living who have held seats in Congress as well as in the Stock Exchange. Here, too, awaiting their Elia, are the Philistine, the radical, the trust-defier and socialist—who, like Fourier, adjusts himself under protest to the present stage of civilization; the promoter, the sportsman of every stripe, the rough-rider and sailor of the war; the altruist to whom none has gone for aid in vain; the strong and dreaded mugger, who at least is no hypocrite, but makes open declaration that he spares no debtor; the recounter, the silent man, the oracle, the wits, the artists, the musicians, the tale-writers, and the poets.

Such types await the delineator of life in the Exchange and confirm the theorem for the make-up of a phalanstery—that every order of person is to be found in the combination of a thousand men.

In a still larger way Mr. Stedman was to fulfil that promise to the friends of his old haunt, but the fulfilment was not so complete as he would have compelled it to be, if Death had tarried till his waning strength could have conquered the delays made by others. His last years were tormented that the Company whose History of the Stock Exchange he edited, failed to issue the second volume. On June 24, 1901, he signed a contract to become the editor-in-chief of the History, and in this spirit: "I have pledged to make it worthy of its subject—something that I shall be willing to leave as a tribute to the Street and the institution where my lot has so long been cast." His strength and daily interest were given to the supervision of this work, and there are many records of value in existence proving how bitterly and unjustly he was tried by conditions over which he could have no authority.

Volume i, quarto, bound in handsome dark green cloth, containing 518 pages, and 50 illustrations in the text, appeared in November, 1905. Its title-page reads: The New York Stock Exchange; its History, its Contribution to National Prosperity, and its relation to American Finance at the outset of the Twentieth Century. In the Table of Contents, we find: The Functions of the Stock Exchange; History of the New York Stock Exchange; Early Days in Manhattan; Genesis of the New York Stock Market; The Pioneer Banks of the Nation; A New Market and the First Constitution; The Crisis of 1818; An Era of Expansion and Strife; From Jackson's Day to the Civil War; Secession; Legal Tenders; Trading in Gold; Phases of War-Time Speculation; Three Notable Corners; Some Market Battles of the Sixties; First Erie Conflicts of 1868; Erie Under the New Control; Black Friday; The Ending of Two Notable Careers; The Passing of the Erie Ring; The Panic of 1873; Recuperation and Resumption; Railway Wars and Truces; An Era of Impaired Confidence; Fresh Battles Among the Railways; Monetary Disturbances; The Threat of Unsound Currency; The Influence of a Foreign War; Culmination of an Era; The New Stock Exchange; The Stock Exchange Clearing House; The Stock Ticker; The Loan Market; The Unlisted Security Market; Municipal Bonds; Annals and Statistics; Constitution and Rules for the Government of The New York Stock Exchange; Legal Status of the New York Stock Exchange.

Mr. Stedman's Preface [1] gives the scope of the work:

> The full significance of such an institution as the New York Stock Exchange,—which is to other Exchanges of the continent what the "Central" office is to a metropolitan telephone system,—scarcely can be realized by the public, by financiers at large, or even by the alert and clear-headed persons constituting its membership. Once in a while some outside observer, possessed of the imaginative faculty, and with a mind broadened by travel and reflection, obtains a vivid conception of its functions and import.
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> The present writer remembers the impression left upon an educated Englishman, a well-known publicist, who made a visit to Wall Street some eighteen years ago. He had been taken through the largest commercial structures in the vicinity, and even to the Stock Exchange itself, without giving expression to unusual interest. But on returning to his friend's offices, upon the upper floor of a building in the rear of the Exchange, he saw a sight that instantly gave him a realization of the extent of our peopled territory, and of the meaning of the Stock Exchange as the focus to which all currents of American purpose and energy converge. It was shortly before the time when the wires of New York's electric system were buried, by enactment, out of sight. Through the air, over New Street, hundreds, seemingly thousands, of these wires stretched toward the Exchange. No bird could fly through their net work, a man could almost walk upon them; in fact, they darkened the street and the windows below their level. The visitor's host suggested that those going north, west, south were carrying messages to and from scores of inland cities and towns—financial ganglia of this land of national wealth and effort—names of which were mentioned. Certain wires were transcontinental, communicating with the towns of the Pacific States. Others served the uses of Montreal, Toronto and kindred points in the Great Dominion. Finally, the competing ocean cables were of course laden with incessant "arbitrage" and other messages to and from London, Paris and Berlin. This ocular demonstration of the relations of the New York Exchange Stock to the Republic in its entirety, and even to the world overseas, proved almost startling to the English traveller. He asserted that within this central field of financial energy and

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[1] For courteous permission to include this Preface the editors are indebted to The Stock Exchange Historical Company.

intercommunication it was impossible not to have the imagination aroused, and the reason convinced of the enormous interests of which Wall Street, through its representative Exchange, is the ceaseless regulator. With philosophic impartiality, he predicted the time when even the largest money centres of the old world would become more or less subsidiary to this dominant market of the Western hemisphere.

That time has now come, and well in advance of any date which then suggested itself to the mind of either the writer or his guest. The close of the Nineteenth Century found those rates of exchange which serve to adjust the "balance of trade" setting in favor of New York, our financial metropolis. It found Europe looking to American bankers for coöperation in the disposition of her governmental securities, and the United States quite able, if need be, to finance their own public and private bonds and their gigantic constructive enterprises, without foreign assistance. Coincidently with this striking, yet foreordained, reversal of the conditions that had prevailed throughout its recorded experience, the New York Stock Exchange easily became, at least for the time, a point of supreme and universal attention; an arena where daily operations ran up to millions of shares of what were really the world's best properties for trade adventure as for investment. It is readily comprehended that upon these activities, under our present civilization, a vast portion of modern industry and progress depend. To give the history of the rise of the Exchange, in the course of a few generations, from its modest beginnings to such a primacy, is the general purpose of this work; and therewithal to exhibit the reciprocating processes of the commercial mechanism which the Exchange regulates,—to show how sane is the common belief in the dignity and indispensability of its functions.

It was doubtless with an instinct for the fitness of things that the Governors of the New York Stock Exchange decreed that the long-postponed construction of a new edifice, worthy of its annals and distinction, and adequate to the demands of the new era, should be undertaken at the outset of the Twentieth Century, as if in tribute to the past and in anticipation of a commanding future. Both the time and the event, we venture to believe, were equally auspicious for the inception of the work now set before the reader.

Although our opening train of thought was suggested by the aspect of the Exchange and its vicinage, before the pressure of the country upon this financial centre became so strenuous that fresh bulwarks were required to sustain it, how much more impressive is the scene at the dawn of a greater epoch. The cloud of wires is no longer visible, but the transformed district is far more significant of national wealth and power. On its streets and alleys, not so long ago, there were relics of the old time insufficiency,—low, musty buildings surviving here and there that gave no just token of the services of the moneyed Agamemnons of their past. Above these towered the lofty pioneers of the structures which now make Wall Street's sky-line boldly emblematic, alike to the stranger and to the familiar observer. Were our Briton, after a look up and down Broadway, now to reënter the district, perhaps through Liberty Street and Nassau, he would confront such a panorama of civic wealth and mastery as exists within the same acreage nowhere else in the world. Yes, and of structural splendor. When the President of America's ranking University recently spoke of New York to New Yorkers, and said that he had seen nothing but the squalor and ugliness of it all, he plainly suffered from the myopia not infrequent with justly eminent men whose observation has been long and closely restricted to a single limited field. Otherwise he would have obtained a synthetic view of the metropolis upon its enlarged scale, and have comprehended a temporary phase of its evolution. He would have realized how the city has been compelled once more to change and expand its framework, and he might have been vouchsafed an imaginative vision of what the readjustment will effect. Within sound of Trinity chimes the process has gone on with fabulous speed, passing well beyond the stage of manifest incompleteness,—although, at this date, the entire face of the block fronting the Exchange, stately as it is, may not unlikely soon give way to imposing reconstructions. Veteran frequenters of the Street have themselves been more impressed, upon returning from foreign tours or Summer vacations, than if they were strangers, as they have marked the surprising changes in Nassau, Pine, Wall and Broad Streets, and Exchange Place. The architecture, that came into life with the inventions of the elevator and the iron building-frame, has passed through its successive periods of opposition, acceptance and admiration. For it has at length developed novel beauties of its own, fully recognized by transatlantic craftsmen, and even the censors who at first mocked at the "canyons" of lower Manhattan now confess that in our sunlit and exhilarating local atmosphere more light and better air penetrate to the ground stories of the Wall Street district than are obtainable on the top-floors of London's "City." At intervals, nevertheless, along the blocks of towering edifices are costly and massive buildings, low in height, and conspicuous for their adherence to classic and historic outlines, such as the Chamber of Commerce, the New York Clearing House, the fine old Doric Treasury—which need ask no odds of its latter-day rivals, the princely banking houses of certain private bankers, and, finally, the new Stock Exchange itself—the centre, and, in the belief of its constructors, the paragon of the whole composition.

The claim is not without justification that this beautiful and enduring citadel of financial activity is fairly proportioned to the new wealth and sovereignty of the American people at large. Yet it must be acknowledged that our elder "cliff-dwellers" and their former associates,—those of whom it may be said that the places which once knew them now know them no more,—were themselves lacking in true prophetic vision, but a few decades ago. They failed to avail themselves of successive opportunities to enlarge the area of the ground belonging to the Exchange, when adjacent property could have been obtained for a song—as compared with its present value. It is believed that an entire block was at one time practically subject to their option, for a sum far smaller than the assets of many a corporation that has been dealt in on the "Floor" though capitalized for quadruple its actual resources. Full appreciation should be awarded to the unwillingness of those former Governors of the Exchange to subject their institution to speculative obligations, but time has again demonstrated that sane financial genius must display ordinary enterprise no less than a wholesome conservatism.

The present work was undertaken in the conviction that at this date, when the commencement of a fresh epoch has been signalized by the erection of a new Exchange, a timely record should be made of the stages wherethrough the conditions of which that structure is the visible emblem have been evolved. An effort to make the narrative complete would still further delay this publication. Financial readjustments succeed one another so rapidly that a chronicler fails to keep pace with them. But the story of a century can be told in such wise as to include its chief events and phases. As to the personages involved, it will be seen that the bankers, brokers, captains of industry, corporations, figuring within these volumes—historically or biographically—are thoroughly representative. Their records, and the vicissitudes and achievements of the Exchange, constitute a drama not hitherto set forth upon the present scale. An admirable basis for its production, notable for the painstaking with which the author has brought to light his material, was compiled, and printed in an elegant limited edition, A. D., 1894, by Mr. Francis L. Eames, then President of the Exchange, and through four administrations one of the worthiest chief officers the institution has ever possessed. From our chapter upon the Stock Exchange Clearing House it can be understood how much the conception and inauguration of that now indispensable adjunct to the mechanism of the Exchange derived from his constructive genius. Acknowledgment is in every way due from writers who have been guided along not a few important paths by the footprints of their pioneer, to President Eames's scholarly explorations. The present History, upon a somewhat inclusive scale, concerns itself not only with the records of the Exchange itself, but with national events in their relation to the generations that come and go where the surging currents of Wall Street's fortune-freighted stream "flow on forever."

In so far as the writers of the History which occupies the major portion of our opening volume have referred to unchanging economic laws, it is hoped that they will not be thought largely in error or without a certain conscientiousness. The test of this must lie in the moral drawn from the effects of undue inflation, such as that which has followed great issues of paper money unsupported by stable gold reserves; from recurring suspensions of specie payment in the past century; from the perilous era of silver inflation; from over-construction and reckless promotion at several periods of national exhilaration, and the habitually redundant issue of "securities" to represent the properties involved; and, finally, from the market speculation engendered by those engaged in such construction and promotion, and by the very method of capitalizing new enterprises which has been accepted as necessary to expedite the country's development. It has been the effort of the writers, without assuming any credit for what are obvious first principles, to touch here and there upon the philosophy which their History teaches "by example." One lesson, at least, is unreservedly impressed,—that the soundness of finance depends simply upon public and private honesty, upon the manful recognition of national, corporate, private and traditional obligations. Contracts between man and man doubtlessly are enforced more rigidly in the world's money centres than elsewhere. Wall Street also has been more sensitive, as regards the national credit, than has the public at large; but with relation to corporation economics, our brokers and financiers, in the direction where temptation necessarily most besets them, have been proverbially lenient. Even this may fairly be attributed less to self-seeking than to an instinctive perception that the exploitation of a new continent involves some discount of the future. Credit until recently has had to do the work of capital. Moreover, in the growth of no other land has it been so verified that the Lord maketh the wrath of man to praise Him. System after system of American railways, built chiefly on credit, if not conceived in sin and born in iniquity, has in its turn —within each of our territorial standard time divisions—passed through stages of liquidation and reorganization to the dividend-paying solvency of a capitalization greater than the stock and bond issues which brought distress upon original investors. It is truthfully declared that although American railways are now capitalized at the enormous total of nearly Thirteen Billions of dollars, they are not overcapitalized, inasmuch as they could not be duplicated for the aggregate amount of their stocks and funded debt.[1]

With each decade new problems arise. Coincidently with the preparations of this work, our vast industrial combinations, devised as it might seem in the very spirit of the earliest socialistic dreamers, are being tested on the whole so successfully that, despite their obvious defects, a new generation already accepts them as a part of the established order.

Our historical narrative would be far from complete without the correlated articles upon the New Exchange, the Stock Exchange Clearing House, the Loan Market, Unlisted Securities, and Municipal Bonds, prepared by acknowledged experts, several of whom are prominently active in the Street. The learned treatise upon Stock Exchange Law by Mr. Dos Passos, who was so long the counsel of the Exchange, may justly be termed authoritative. To its author, and to Messrs. Rodemeyer, Wilson, Chamberlain,

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[1] The figures upon going to press, in 1910, are nearly eighteen billions. [The Editors.]

Judson, Hotchkiss, and the late Mr. W. F. Shanks, the projectors and the editor of this work are gratefully indebted. Mr. Thomas Hitchcock's, [Mathew Marshall], chapter on the Functions of the Stock Exchange is a masterly discussion, void of fallacy and prejudice, by one long recognized as our most philosophical observer of financial events.

The existing Constitution of the Exchange is included, for reference now and in time to come, and a chapter of Annals and Statistics, compiled by that trustworthy statistician, Mr. Milton J. Platt, clearly shows the growth of local and national resources since the date when Wall Street attained such potency at the outbreak of the Civil War. . . .

While this work is an independent enterprise, and in no respect an exception to the wisely invariable rule of the Stock Exchange against the endorsement of unofficial publications, its managers gladly acknowledge their indebtedness to various officers and leading members of the Board for unstinted advice and aid given in their individual capacities. Information has always been at command, and with few exceptions our work has been sustained by the good will and practical encouragement of those with whom its editor-in-chief was so long a daily associate. Without the coöperation of the Board members the costly limited edition now issuing could not have been published. On the part of the publishers, it may properly be disclosed that the terms of subscription were placed on the lowest basis that would cover the outlay involved; in addition, the labors which have deferred its completion beyond the expectation of all concerned have rendered it anything but a product of commercialism. It has been steadily prosecuted, nevertheless, in maintenance of the good faith of its projectors, and with an abiding confidence in its value as a commemorative and historical record to both the present and the future.

After the sale of Mr. Stedman's Seat, in the Exchange, the price of Seats rose to a much higher value, and his enforced sale seemed a tragedy. His interest in the market stayed with him to the end. Within a few weeks of his death, in writing to Mrs. Edward Howland, he says:

Some time ago you asked me for a word concerning the National financial scare and its probable outcome. I could have said a good deal, if I had had the time to do so. From the first it has been a run by the banks upon one another and upon the people rather than by the people upon the banks. All classes of citizens in this country have, with exceptions, been more prosperous and have accumulated more up to the present moment than at any previous time. Even Egypt in Pharaoh's time had only seven years of prosperity, and we have had ten. These resources have not been impaired, except for the losses of plutocrats and the marking down of fictitious security values. The crops of this year alone amount to $7,000,000,000. Now under our defective economic system, we are all forced to adjust ourselves to the conditions of faulty civilization. Let me frankly say that the South has shown very little sense of late. Your state and others, in forcing the railways to charge less rates than the cost of running them, are sawing off the limb between themselves and the tree. Either the prices paid for labor and for equipment and repair by the railways have got to come down or the Southern railway system upon which you all depend must go to ruin. However, there can be little doubt that the cost of food, clothing, and labor must soon diminish, as the aftermath of what the capitalists and investors at large of every grade have just suffered. I haven't time to speak of the responsibility of a strenuous President, who has been riding the National horse, using both whip and spur until the animal himself has gone over a ground that it should have taken years to cover. In our oxygenated atmosphere we need a sedative rather than a stimulant. Well, the scare is now over and things will soon go on in a normal and soberer way as to speculation in stocks, real estate, crops, etc. Fairhope very likely may even profit by the experiences of people who now wish to seek "fresh woods and pastures new."

And to his assistant this characteristic word on a souvenir post-card of Brooklyn Bridge:

Gilsey House has gone up, Brooklyn Bridge is suspended, and the subway gone under, in the financial panic. If Monday will suit you for a work-day here, glad to have you come.

He did miss his old comrades, and always felt the loss of his Seat. After this it became his habit to deal in stocks "from the outside," going down every other day for a few hours, sometimes more often, for he felt he "*must* get into the market," and that which had been his routine for so many years could not be entirely given up. For, as he himself wrote, looking, we may suspect, askance in the mirror,—

> In time the touch of the Floor becomes essential to the broker's feet, though perchance, if the years go on without attainment of the competence that should be his exit-fee, he realizes more keenly than men engaged in other lines of industry the force of the imperial lament for a lost day. He is perhaps less conscience-stricken if for his spare hours he has some work of which the concrete product is an aid to repose, yet the distraction of that very avocation—the divided mind—lessens his prospect of independence. For the man of thought and feeling, no less than for the most volatile operator, there is no escape from the process that subdues the hand to what it works in. The life becomes a habit. . . . The skipper whose sea-going days are ended faces his cottage to the ocean, and manœuvers his tiny sloop around the bay; but a retired broker haunting the penumbra of the stock market is little other than a Wall-street ghost. Once without the gates, the bar is absolute. His lost privileges may now be more than ever valued; though surrendered in exchange for rest, or travel, or some vocation long desired, he cannot but remember such things were; he has even a sense of fellowship—not precisely with a cashiered soldier, a disbarred lawyer, an unfrocked priest, but, let us say, with Peter Schlemihl after he had sold his shadow.
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> I have been told by a former member that after retirement from business had brought to a sudden close his share of the market's pulsation it went on within him automatically, like that of his bodily heart. The strain and interest of steadfast watchings were his in sleep, the zest of speculation, the sense of gain and loss. Since all remembered dreams are abnormal, he found himself hampered, as if a helpless shade among the living. He was on the Floor with his old associates, but something mystical opposed the recognition of his bid or offer. Men looked blankly at him, more often not seeing or hearing him at all. The effort and agony of the bewildered spirit of the slain physician, in "The Gates Between," were his piteous lot. Upon a sudden, invariably, the consciousness would return to him that he no longer owned his seat, that he was an interloper, and that nothing but extreme consideration prevented him from being shown to the door. Or haply, in the

stress of dealing, they had not thought his presence strange—had forgotten for the moment, as he had forgotten, that he no longer was one of them. Humiliated to the utmost, he would retreat as unobservedly as possible, wondering how he could have blundered into such a coil, and pledging himself to keep clear of it henceforth. But again and again in his dreams, for a year or two, though at lengthening intervals, he would have the same gruesome experience. Gradually his night-penance shaded into the discomfiture of an office-trader, unable to succeed, inasmuch as his brokers persistently failed to execute his orders with promptness and intelligence—proof that at last, indeed, the figments of his weary brain were those conjured up by the rank outsider, whose vested prerogative it is to attribute the outcome of a faulty speculation to the laches of his agent on the Floor.[1]

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[1] From "Life 'On the Floor,'" by E. C. Stedman, *Century Magazine*, November, 1903. How true this last paragraph was to the habits of Stedman's dream-life, how deeply his very soul yearned for the benediction of his Alma Mater, Yale, is more than suggested by the fact that, for years after receiving the desired degree, he was haunted in sleep by dreams wherein he was denied it.

END OF VOLUME ONE